

George Washington Papers, Series 2, Letterbooks 1754-1799

To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Not until within these few days have I been favored with your letter of the 18th. of Octr. introductory of Mr. Porter. I beg you to be assured that I shall have pleasure in shewing him every civility in my power while he makes this region the place of his residence; as I shall to any other, to whom you may give letters recommendatory.

A few days ago I received from on board some vessel in the harbor of Alexana. two cheese's and a barrel (wrote thereon Major Rice)⁸⁶ of Cranberries, unaccompanied by letter, but said to be a present from you. If this be the fact I pray you to accept my thanks for this token of your recollection, or to offer them to Majr. Rice, if the barrel came from him.

We have nothing stirring in this quarter worthy of observation, except the passing of two Acts by the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland (exactly similar) for improving and extending the navigation of the river Potomac from tide water, as high up as it shall be found practicable, and communicating it by good roads with the nearest navigable waters to the Westward: which acts in their consequences, may be of great political, as well as commercial advantages: the first to the confederation, as it may tie the Settlers of the Western Territory to the Atlantic States by interest, which is the only knot that will hold. Whilst those of Virginia and Maryland will be more immediately benefited by the large field it opens for the latter. Books for receiving subscriptions are to be opened at Alexandria and other places the 8th. instant, and continue so until the 10th.

Library of Congress

86. Maj. Nathan Rice. He was formerly aide to General Lincoln.

of May; as the navigable part of the business is to be undertaken by a company to be incorporated for the purpose. With great truth and sincerity I am, etc.⁸⁷

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1785.

Sir: I have lately received two letters from you, one of the 14th and the other of the 25th of last month.

The Bonds which you have taken from Mr. Whiting⁸¹ had better remain in your hands until they are discharged and by the time you propose to be at Belvoir in April I will endeavor to prepare a proper Rental for you if it shall be in my power from the pressure of other matters.

It was always my intention and ever my expectation that the Tenants should pay the taxes of their own Lotts, but if the Leases neither expresses nor implies it I do not suppose there is anything else to compel them, consequently Mr. Whiting must be allowed such sums as he has actually paid; look however at his Lease and judge yourself of the fact as I speak more from what ought to be perhaps than what really is, and do not want to enter into an improper litigation of the matter. I am etc.

P.S. Mrs. Washington begs you would get from some of my Tenants, or others, 10 or a dozen lbs. of good hackled Flax for her.⁸²

87. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

81. Henry Whiting.

Library of Congress

82. This "Letter Book" text in the *Washington Papers* has been checked against that printed in the Washington and Tilghman sale catalogue (Birch's Sons, Philadelphia, 1892) and justifiable changes made accordingly. The P.S. is not in the "Letter Book" copy.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, February 8, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since my last, I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 26th. of Decr. and 16th. of January. I have now the pleasure to inform you, that the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have enacted Laws, of which the enclosed is a copy; they are exactly similar in both States. At the same time and at the joint and equal expence of the two Governments, the sum of 6666 # Dollars are voted for opening and keeping in repair a road from the highest practicable navigation of this river, to that of the river Cheat or Monongahela, as commissioners (who are appointed to survey and lay out the same) shall find most convenient and beneficial to the Western Settlers: and have concurred in an application to the State of Pennsylvania for permission to open another road from Fort Cumberland to the Yohoganey, at the three forks or Turkey foot. A similar Bill to the one enclosed, is passed by our Assembly, respecting the navigation of James river, and the communication between it and the waters of the great Kanhawa, and the Executive authorised by a resolve of the Assembly to appoint Com

missioners to examine and report the most convenient course for a canal between Elizabeth river and the waters of Roanoke; with an estimate of the expence: and if the best communication shall be found to require the concurrence of the State of No. Carolina thereto, to make application to the Legislature thereof accordingly.

Towards the latter part of the year 1783 I was honored with a letter from the Countess of Huntington, briefly reciting her benevolent intention of spreading Christianity among the Tribes of Indians inhabiting our Western Territory; and Expressing a desire of my advice

Library of Congress

and assistance to carry this charitable design into execution. I wrote her Ladyship for answer, that it would by no means comport with the plan of retirement I had promised myself, to take an active or responsible part in this business; and that it was my belief, there was no other way to effect her pious and benevolent designs, but by first reducing these people to a state of greater civilization, but that I wou'd give every aid in my power, consistent with the ease and tranquility, to which I meant to devote the remainder of my life, to carry her plan into effect. Since that I have been favored with other letters from her, and a few days ago under cover from Sir James Jay the papers herewith enclosed.

As the plan contemplated by Lady Huntington, according to the outlines exhibited, is not only unexceptionable in its design and tendency, but has humanity and charity for its object; and may I conceive, be made subservient to valuable political purposes, I take the liberty of laying the matter before

you for your free and candid sentiments thereon; the communication I make of this matter to you sir, is in a private way, but you are at full liberty to communicate the plan of Lady Huntington, to the members individually; or officially to Congress, as the importance and propriety of the measure may strike you. My reasons for it are these: 1st. I do not believe that any of the States to whom she has written (unless it may be New York) are in circumstances, since their cession of Territory, to comply with the requisition respecting emigration; for it has been privately hinted to me, and ought not to become a matter of public notoriety, that notwithstanding the indefinite expressions of the Address respecting the numbers or occupations of the emigrants, which was purposely omitted to avoid giving alarms in England, the former will be great, and the useful artisans among them, many. 2d Because such emigration, if it should effect the object in view, besides the humane and charitable purposes which would be thereby answered, will be of immense political consequence; and even if this should not succeed to her Ladyships wishes, it must nevertheless, be of considerable importance from the encrease of population by orderly and well disposed characters, who would at once form a barrier and attempt the conversion of the Indians without involving an expence to the Union. I see but one

Library of Congress

objection to a compact, unmixed and powerful settlement of this kind, if it is likely to be so, the weight of which you will judge. It is, (and her Ladyship seems to have been aware of it, and endeavours to guard against it) placing a people in a body upon our exterior, where they will be contiguous to Canada, who may bring with them strong prejudices against us, and our form of Government, and equally

strong attachments to the country and Constitution they leave, without the means, being detached and unmixed with Citizens of different sentiments, of having them eradicated. Her Ladyship has spoken so feelingly and sensibly, on the religious and benevolent purposes of the plan, that no language of which I am possessed, can add aught to enforce her observations. And no place I think bids so fair to answer her views as that spot in Hutchin's map, mark'd Miami Village and Fort, from hence there is a communication to all parts by water and at which, in my opinion we ought to have a Post.

Do not think it strange my good Sir, that I send you the original papers from Lady Huntington. Many, mistakenly, think I am retired to ease and that kind of tranquility which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been *obliged* to write so much *myself*, as I have done since my retirement. Was this confined to friendly communications, and to my own business, it would be equally pleasing and trifling: but I have a thousand references of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled; but which, nevertheless, must receive some answer; these, with applications for certificates, copies of Orders &c. &c. &c. deprive me of my usual and necessary exercise.

I have tryed, but hitherto in vain, to get a Secretary or Clerk, to take upon him the drudging part of this business: that you might not wonder at my parting with original papers on an important subject, I thought it incumbent upon me to assign the reason,

and I beg you to be assured, that I have no other motive for it.

Library of Congress

Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlet you sent me, and for the resolutions respecting the temporary and permanent seat of Government. If I might be permitted to hazard an opinion of the latter, I would say, that by the time your Federal buildings on the banks of the Delaware, along the point of triangle, are fit for the reception of Congress; it will be found that they are very improperly placed for the seat of the Empire, and will have to undergo a second edition in a more convenient one. If the union continues, and this is not the case, I will agree to be classed among the false prophets, and suffer for evil prediction. The letter for the Marqs. de la Fayette, I pray you to forward by the Packet. With great esteem and regard, I am etc.⁸⁹

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, February 15, 1785.

My Dr. Marqs. I have had the pleasure to receive your affectionate letter of the 21st. of December, dated on board the Nymph Frigate in the harbour of New York; and felt all that man could feel from the flattering expression of it.

My last to you, if I recollect right, was dispatched from Annapolis; whither I went at the request of this State to settle a plan (to be mutually adopted by the Legislatures of both States) for improving and extending the navigation of the river

89. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Potomac as far as it should be found practicable, and for opening a road of communication therefrom, to the nearest navigable water to the westward. In both, I happily succeeded. The Bill, of which I send you a copy, was prepared at that time, and has since passed both Assemblies in the usual forms, and must speak for itself. The road of communication is to be undertaken on public account, at the joint and equal expence of the two States. Virginia has passed a similar Act to the one enclosed, respecting James river, and its communication with the waters of the Great Kanhawa, and have authorized the Executive

Library of Congress

to appoint Commissioners to examine, and fix on the most convenient course for a canal from the waters of Elizabeth river, in this State, to those passing thro' the State of No. Carolina; and report their proceedings therein, with an estimate of the expence necessary for opening such Canal, to the next General Assembly.

Hence my dear Marquis you will perceive that the exertions which you found, and left me engag'd in, to impress my Countrymen with the advantages of extending the inland navigation of our rivers, and opening free and easy communications with the Western Territory (thereby binding them to us by interest, the only knot which will hold) has not been employ'd in vain. The Assembly of this State have accompanied these Acts with another, very flattering one for me, but which has been productive of infinitely more embarrassment than pleasure. This Act directs the Treasurer of the State to subscribe fifty shares in each of the navigations, Potomac and James, for my use and benefit,⁹⁰ which it declares is to be

90. This may be an error of the "Letter Book" copyist. The act directed the subscription of 50 shares in the Potomac Navigation Co. and 100 shares in the James River Navigation Co.

vested in me and my heirs forever: generous as this Act is, the reasons assigned for it, with the flattering, yet delicate expression thereof, renders it more valuable than the grant itself; and this it is which perplexes me. It is not my wish, nor is it my intention, to accept this gratuitous gift, but how to decline it with out appearing to slight the favors of my Country, committing an act of disrespect to the Legislature, or having motives of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness ascribed to me, I am at a loss: but will endeavour to hit upon some expedient before the next Session, to avoid these imputations. This was the closing Act of the last, without my having the most distant suspicion that such a matter was in contemplation; nor did I ever hear of it until it had passed, and the Assembly had adjourned.

Library of Congress

With what readiness the subscription Books will fill, is not in my power at this early stage of the business, to inform you; in general, the friends to the measure are sanguine; but among those good wishes are more at command, than money, consequently it is not only uncertain of whom the company may consist, but (as its existence depends upon contingencies) whether there will be one or not. therefore at this moment we are all in the dark respecting this and other matters. One thing however is certain, namely, if a company should be established and the work is undertaken, a skilful Engineer, or rather a person of practical knowledge will be wanted to direct and superintend it. I should be glad therefore my Dr. Sir you would bear this matter in your mind, that if the company when formed should be disposed to obtain one from Europe, I should prefer France, proper characters

may be applied to, without loss of time. You will readily perceive My Dr. Marqs. that this is more a private intimation of mine, than an authorized request, consequently how improper it would be to raise the expectation of any Gentleman to the employment, without being able to give him the appointment. If a company should be formed, it will be composed, no doubt of many men, and these of many minds; and whilst myself and others may be disposed to go to France for an Engineer, the majority may incline to send to England for one, on account of the language, and from an opinion that there is greater similarity between the inland navigation of that Kingdom and the improvements which are intended here, than prevails between any in France and them; whilst others again may turn their Eyes towards Holland. The nature of our work, as far as I have been able to form an opinion of it, will be first, at the principal falls of the river to let Vessels down by means of Locks, or, if Rumsey's plan should succeed, by regular or gradual slopes. in either case, the bad effect of Ice and drift wood in floods, are to be guarded against. 2d. As the Canals at these places will pass thro' rocky ground, to be able to remove these with skill and facility, and to secure the Canals when made. 3dly. in other parts of the river, the water will require to be deepened, and in these places the bottom generally is either rock under water, or loose stone of different sizes; for it rarely happens that Sand or Mud is to be

Library of Congress

found in any of the shallow parts of the River. I mention these things because it is not the man who may be best skilled in Dikes;

who knows best how to conduct water upon a level, or who can carry it thro' hills or over Mountains, that would be most useful to us.

We have had a mild winter hitherto, and nothing new that I recollect, in the course of it; for I believe Congress had determined before you left the Country, to fix their permanent seat in the vicinity of Trenton; and their temporary one at New York. The little Sprig at Annapolis, to whose nod so many lofty trees of the forest had bowed, has yielded the Sceptre. thursday last placed it at the feet of Mr. M:— who perhaps may wield it with as much despotism as she did.

If I recollect right, I told you when here, that I had made one or two attempts to procure a good Jack Ass from Spain, to breed from. Colo. Hooe, or rather Mr. Harrison, was one of the Channels thro' which I expected to be supplied; but a day or two ago the former furnished me with the enclosed extract from the latter. As it is not convenient for me to pay such a price, I have desired Colo. Hooe to countermand the order, and the same causes induce me to pray, that if these are the prices of a good Jack (and no other I would have) that you would decline executing the commission I gave you of a similar kind.

I will use my best endeavours to procure the seeds (from Kentucky) which are contained in your list; but as the distance at which I live from that country is great, and frequent miscarriages of them may happen, you must prepare yourself for delay.

I will write as you desire, to Cary⁹¹ the late Printer of the Volunteer Journal in Ireland. Bushrod Washington, sensible of your polite invitation, but unable to avail himself of it, wrote you a letter of grateful acknowledgments and thanks;

91. Mathew Carey.

Library of Congress

which letter I sent under cover to the President of Congress with a request to deliver it to you, but you had sailed: I presume he has since forwarded it to you.

I am possessed of the Cypher⁹² which was used by Mr. Livingston whilst he was Secretary of foreign affairs; if therefore he had not different ones, I can when necessary, correspond with you in his.

Every body of this family, and those who are connected with it, join in the most sincere and affectionate wishes for you and yours, with the most affectionate of your friends.

P. S. If it should so happen that the subscriptions for opening the navigations of the rivers Potomac and James should not (from the want of money here) fill in the time required by the Acts, do you think that there are persons of your acquaintance in France who might incline to become adventurers in it? I give it as my *decided* opinion to you that *both* are practicable beyond all manner of doubt: and that men who can afford to lay a little while out of their money, are laying the foundation of the greatest returns of any speculation I know of in the world.⁹³

92. There are several undated ciphers in the *Washington Papers*, grouped at the end of the year 1783. One is Maj. Benjamin Tallmadge's cipher and another is Robert Morris's; but none of them are labeled as Robert R. Livingston's cipher.

93. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THOMAS JEFFERSON**

Mount Vernon, February 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: I had the pleasure to find by the public Gazettes that your passage to France had been short, and pleasant. I have no doubt but that your reception at Court has been equally polite, and agreeable.

Library of Congress

I have the honor to inclose you the copy of an Act which passed the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland at the close of their respective Sessions; about the first of last month. The circumstances of these States, it is said, would not enable them to take the matter up, altogether, on public ground; but they have granted at the joint and equal expence of the two, 6666 # dollars for the purpose of opening a road of communication between the highest navigation of the Potomac, and the river Cheat; and have concurred in an application to the State of Pensylvania for leave to open another road from Fort Cumberland or Wills Creek, to the Yohiogany, at the three forks, or Turkey foot.

Besides these joint Acts of the States of Virginia and Maryland; the former has passed a similar law respecting the navigation of James river, and its communications with the Green brier; and have authorized the Executive to appoint Commissioners, who shall carefully examine and fix on the most convenient course for a Canal from the Waters of Elizabeth River in this State, to those passing through the State of North Carolina; and report their proceedings therein, with an estimate of the expence necessary for opening the Same, to the next General Assembly; and in case they shall find that, the best course for such canal, will require the concurrence of the Sate [*sic*] of North Carolina in the opening thereof, they are further authorized and instructed to signify the

same to the said State, and to concert with any person or persons who may be appointed on the part thereof, the most convenient and equitable plan for the execution of such work; and to report the result to the General Assembly.

With what Success the Books will be opened, I cannot, at this early stage of the business, inform you; in general the friends of the measure are better stocked with good wishes than money; the former of which unfortunately, goes but a little way in works where the latter is necessary, and is not to be had. and yet, if this matter could be well understood, it should seem that, there would be no deficiency of the latter, any more than of the former; for certain I am, there is no speculation of which I have an idea, that will ensure such *certain* and *ample* returns of the money advanced, with a great, and encreasing interest,

Library of Congress

as the tolls arising from these navigations; the accomplishment of which, if funds can be obtained, admits of no more doubt in my mind, under proper direction, than that a ship with skilful Mariners can be carried from hence to Europe. What a misfortune therefore would it be, if a project which is big with such great political consequences, commercial advantages, and which might be made so productive to private Adventurers should miscarry; either from the inability of the two States to execute it, at the public expence, or for want of means, or the want of spirit or foresight to use them, in their citizens. Supposing a danger of this, do you think, Sir, the monied men of France, Holland, England or any other Country with which you may have intercourse, might be induced to become Adventurers in the Scheme? Or if from the remoteness

of the object, this should appear ineligible to them, would they incline to lend money to one, or both of these States, if there should be a disposition in them to borrow, for this purpose? Or, to one or more individuals in them, who are able, and would give sufficient security for the repayment? At what interest, and on what conditions respecting time, payment of interest, &ca. could it be obtained?

I foresee such extensive political consequences depending on the navigation of these two rivers, and communicating them by short and easy roads with the waters of the Western territory, that I am pained by every doubt of obtaining the means for their accomplishment: for this reason, I also wish you would be so obliging as to direct your enquiries after one or more characters, who have skill in this kind of work; that if Companies should be incorporated under the present Acts, and should incline to send to France, or England for an Engineer, or Man of practical knowledge in these kinds of works, there may be a clue to the application. You will perceive tho' my dear Sir, that no engagement, obligatory or honorary can be entered into at this time, because no person can answer for tile determination of the Companies, admitting their formation.

As I have accustomed myself to communicate matters of difficulty to you, and have met forgiveness for it, I will take the liberty, my good Sir, of troubling you with the rehearsal of

Library of Congress

one more, which has lately occurred to me. Among the Laws of the last Session of our Assembly, there is an Act which particularly respects myself; and tho' very flattering, is also very embarrassing to me. This Act, after honorable, flattering, and delicate recitals, directs the treasurer of the State to Subscribe towards each of the

Navigations fifty Shares for my use and benefit; which it declares, is to be vested in me and my heirs forever. It has ever been my wish, and it is yet my intention, never to receive any thing from the United States, or an individual State for any Services I have hitherto rendered, or which in the course of events, I may have it in my power to render them hereafter as it is not my design to accept of any appointment from the public, which might make emoluments necessary: but how to decline this act of generosity without incurring the imputation of disrespect to my Country, and a slight of her favors on the one hand, or that of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on the other, is the difficulty. As none of these have an existence in my breast, I should be sorry, if any of them should be imputed to me. The Assembly, as if determined that I should not act from the first impulse, made this the last act of their Session; without my having the smallest intimation or suspicion of their generous intention. As our Assembly is now to be holden once a year only, I shall have time to hit upon some expedient that will enable me to indulge the bent of my own inclination, without incurring any of the imputations before mentioned; and of hearing the sentiments of my friends upon the subject; than whose, none would be more acceptable than yours.

Your friends in our Assembly will have been able to give you so much better information of what has passed there, and of the general state of matters in this Commonwealth, that a repetition from me

is although unnecessary, and might be imperfect. If we are to credit News paper Accts. the flames of war are again kindled, or are about to be so, in Europe. None of the sparks, it is to be hoped will cross the Atlantic and touch the inflameable matter in these States. I pray you to believe that with sentiments of great esteem, etc.⁹⁵

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: In a letter of old date, but lately received, from the Countess of Huntington, she refers me to a letter which her Ladyship says you obligingly undertook to forward to me: never having received one from her to the purport she mentions, there can be no doubt but that this letter with your cover to it, have met the fate of some of mine to you; as I have wrote several within the last twelve or eighteen months, without any acknowledgement of them from you.

The only letters I recollect to have received from you since my retirement are dated the 9th. of Decr. 1783, and 10th. of June 1784. the first, relates to the heir of Mr. Bristons, the second, to a case with pictures, which you were so obliging as to commit to the care of the Revd. Mr. Bracken; and which has not yet got to hand. In Novr. last at Richmond, I happened in company with this gentleman who told me it was then in his possession at Wmsburgh, and that it should be forwarded by the first safe conveyance to this place, for your kind and polite attention in this matter, I pray you

95. From the original in the *Jefferson Papers*.

Jefferson answered (July 10): "My wishes to see you made perfectly easy by receiving those just returns of gratitude from our country, to which you art entitled, would induce me to be contented with saying, what is a certain truth, that the world would be pleased with seeing them heaped on you, and would consider your receiving them as no derogation from your reputation. but I must own that the declining them will add to that reputation, as it will shew that your motives have been pure and without any alloy. this testimony however is not wanting either to those who know you or who do not. I must therefore repeat that I think the receiving them will not in the least lessen the respect of the world if from any

Library of Congress

circumstances they would be convenient to you. the candour of my communication will find its justification I know with you." Jefferson's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

to receive my thanks.

As soon as your letter of the 9th. of Decr., above mentioned (accompanied by one from Mrs. Briston, and the memorial from the Excors of the Will of her deceased husband) came to my hands, I transmitted them to the Govr., who laid them before the Assembly which was then sitting: but what the result of it was, I have never yet heard, precisely. This case was involved in the general confiscation of British property, which makes discrimination difficult. How far the Law on national ground is just, or the expediency of it in the political scale, wise and proper, I will not undertake to determine; but of this I am well convinced, that the most wretched management of the sales has pervaded every State, without I believe a single exception in favor of any one of them.

I cannot at this moment recur to the contents of those letters of mine to you which I suspect have miscarried; further than that they were all expressive of an earnest wish to see you and Mrs. Fairfax once more fixed in this country; and to beg that you would consider Mr. Vernon as your home until you could build with convenience, in which request Mrs. Washington joins very sincerely. I never look towards Belvoir, without having this uppermost in my mind. But alas! Belvoir is no more! I took a ride there the other day to visit the ruins, and ruins indeed they are. The dwelling house and the two brick buildings in front, underwent the ravages of the fire; the walls of which are very much injured: the other Houses are sinking under the depredation of time and inattention, and I believe are now scarcely worth repairing.

In a word, the whole are, or very soon will be a heap of ruin. When I viewed them, when I considered that the happiest moments of my life had been spent there, when I could not trace a room in the house (now all rubbish) that did not bring to my mind the recollection of pleasing scenes, I was obliged to fly from them; and came home with

Library of Congress

painful sensations, and sorrowing for the contrast. Mrs. Morton⁹⁶ still lives at your Barn quarter. The management of your business is entrusted to one Muse (son to a Colonel of that name,⁹⁷ whom you cannot have forgotten), he is, I am told, a very active and industrious man; but in what sort of order he has your Estate, I am unable to inform you, never having seen him since my return to Virginia.

It may be and I dare say is presumed that if I am not returned to my former habits of life, the change is to be ascribed to a preference of ease and indolence to exercise and my wonted activity: But be assured my dear Sir, that at no period of the War have I been obliged myself to go thro' more drudgery in writing, or have suffered so much confinement to effect it, as since what is called my retirement to domestic ease and tranquillity. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that I have been able since I came home, to give very little attention to my own concerns, or to those of others, with which I was entrusted. My Accounts stand as I left them near ten years ago; those who owed me money, a very few instances excepted, availed themselves of what are called the tender Laws, and paid me off with a shilling and sixpence in the pound. Those to whom I owed, I have now to pay under heavy taxes with specie, or its equivalent value. I do not mention these matters by way of complaint, but as an apology for not having rendered you a full and perfect statement of the Acct.

96. Wife of Rev. Andrew Morton.

97. Col. George Muse.

as it may stand between us, 'ere this. I allotted this Winter, supposing the dreariness of the season would afford me leisure to overhaul and adjust all my papers (which are in sad disorder, from the frequent hasty removals of them, from the reach of our transatlantic foes, when their Ships appeared): but I reckoned without my host; Company, and a continual reference of old military matters, with which I ought to have no concern; applications for Certificates of service &c., copies of orders and the Lord knows what

Library of Congress

besides, to which whether they are complied with or not, some response must be made, engross nearly my whole time. I am now endeavoring to get some person as a Secretary or Clerk to take the fatiguing part of this business off my hands. I have not yet succeeded, but shall continue my enquiries 'till one shall offer, properly recommended.

Nothing has occurred of late worth noticing, except the renewed attempts of the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland to improve and extend the navigation of the river Potomac as far as it is practicable, and communicating it by good roads (at the joint and equal expence of the two States) with the waters of the amazing territory behind us. A copy of this Act (exactly similar in both states) I do myself the honor to enclose you. One similar to it passed the Legislature of this State for improving and extending the navigation of James river, and opening a good road between it and Green-briar. These acts were accompanied by another of the Virginia Assembly, very flattering and honorable for me, not more so for the magnitude of the gift, than the avowed

gratitude, and delicacy of its expression, in the recital to it. The purport of it is, to vest 100 shares (50 in each navigation)⁹⁸ in me and my heirs forever. But it is not my intention to accept of it; altho', were I otherwise disposed, I should consider it as the foundation of the *greatest* and most *certain* income that the like sum can produce in any speculation whatever. So certain is the accomplishment of the work, if the sum proposed should be raised to carry it on, and so inconceivably will the tolls increase by the accumulating produce which will be water borne on the navigation of these two rivers, which penetrate so far and communicate so nearly, with the navigable waters to the Westward.

At the same time that I determine not to accept this generous and gratuitous offer of my Country, I am at a loss in what manner to decline it, without an apparent slight or disrespect to the Assembly on the one hand, or exposing myself to the imputation of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on the other, neither have an existence in my breast, and neither would I wish to have ascribed to me. I shall have time however to think of the matter, before the next session; for as if it was meant that I should have

Library of Congress

no opportunity to decline the offer at the *last* , it was the closing act thereof, without any previous intimation, or suspicion in my mind, of the intention. Admitting that Companies should be incorporated for the purposes mentioned in the Act, do you conceive my good Sir, that a person perfectly skilled in works of this sort, could be readily obtained from England? And upon what terms?

It is unnecessary I persuade myself, to use arguments to convince Mrs. Fairfax and yourself, to the sincere regard and attachment and affection Mrs. Washington and I have for you both, or to assure you

98. See note to Washington's letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Feb. 15, 1785, *ante*.

how much, I am, etc.

P.S. Do you think it would be in your power, with ease and convenience, to procure for me, a male and female Deer or two, the cost of transportation I would gladly be at. If I should ever get relieved from the drudgery of the pen, it would be my wish to engage in these kind of rural amusements, raising of shrubberies &c. After what I have said in the body of this letter, I will not trouble you with an apology for such a scrawl as it now exhibits, you must receive it, my good Sir, as we have done better things, better for worse.⁹⁹

To THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785.

My Lady: The very polite and obliging letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 8th. of April by Sir James Jay, never came to my hands until the 17th. of last month, and is the best apology I can make for a silence, which might otherwise appear inattentive, if not disrespectful, to a correspondence which does me much honor.

Library of Congress

The other letter which your Ladyship refers to, as having passed thro' the medium of our good friend Mr. Fairfax has never yet appeared; and it is matter of great regret, that letters are so often intercepted by negligence, curiosity or motives still more unworthy.

99. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I am persuaded that some of my letters to Mr. Fairfax, as well as his (covering your Ladyships) to me, have miscarried, as I have never received an acknowledgment of some of mine to him, tho' long since written.

With respect to your humane and benevolent intentions towards the Indians, and the plan which your Ladyship has adopted to carry them into effect, they meet my highest approbation; and I should be very happy to find every possible encouragement given to them. It has ever been my opinion, since I have had opportunities to observe, and to reflect upon the ignorance, indolence and general pursuits of the Indians, that all attempts to reclaim, and introduce any system of religion or morality among them, would prove fruitless, until they could be first brought into a state of greater civilization; at least that this attempt should accompany the other, and be enforced by example: and I am happy to find that it is made the ground work of your Ladyships plan.

With respect to the other parts of the plan, and the prospect of obtaining Lands for the Emigrants, who are to be the instruments employed in the execution of it, my letter to Sir James Jay in answer to his to me on this subject, will convey every information, which is in my power, at this time to give your Ladyship; and therefore I take the liberty of enclosing a transcript of it. Agreeably to the assurance given in it, I have written fully to the President of Congress, with whom I have a particular intimacy, and transmitted copies of your Ladyships plan, addresses and letter to the several States therein mentioned, with my approving sentiments thereon. I have informed him, that tho' it comes to him as a private letter from me; it is nevertheless optional in him to make it a matter

Library of Congress

of private communication to the members individually, or officially to Congress, as his judgment shall dictate; giving it as my opinion, among other reasons, that I did not believe since the cession of Lands by individual States to the United States, any one of them (except New York) was in circumstances, however well inclined it might be, to carry your Ladyships plan into effect.

What may be the result of your Ladyships Addresses to the States of North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York, individually; or of my statemt. of the matter in a friendly way to the President of Congress for the united deliberation of the whole, is not for me to anticipate, even were I acquainted with their sentiments. I have already observed, that neither of the States (unless Nw. York may be in circumstances to do it) can in my opinion furnish good Lands in a body for such emigrants as your Ladyship seems inclin'd to provide for. That Congress can, if the treaty which is now depending with the Western Indians should terminate favourably and a cession of Lands be obtained from them, which I presume is one object for holding it, is certain; and unless the reasons which I have mentioned in my letter to Sir James Jay should be a lot or bar, I have not a doubt but that they would do it; in which case, any quantity of Land (within such cession or purchase) might be obtained. If, ultimately, success should not attend any of these applications, I submit as a dernier resort, for your Lady-ships information and consideration, a Gazette containing the terms upon which I have offered

several tracts of Land (the quantity of my own in that country, and which lie as convenient to the Western Tribes of Indians as any in that territory (appertaining to an individual State), as your Ladyship may perceive by having recourse to Hutchins's Evans's, or any other map of that Country, and comparing the descriptive Lands therewith; and being informed that Virginia has ceded all her claim to lands No. West of the Ohio, to the United States, and that the Western boundary of Pennsylvania is terminate by a meridian which crosses the river but a little distance from Fort Pitt.

Library of Congress

It will appear evident, from the date of my publication, that I could not at the time it was promulgated, have had an eye to your Ladyships plan of emigration; and I earnestly pray that my communication of the matter at this time, may receive no other interpretation than what is really meant, that is, a last (if it should be thought an eligible) resort. I have no doubt but that Lands, if to be had at all, may be obtained from the United States, or an individual State, upon easier terms than those upon which I have offered mine; but being equally persuaded that these of mine, from their situation and other local advantages, are worth what I ask, I should not incline to take less for them, unless the *whole* by good and responsible characters (after an Agent in their behalf had previously examined into the quality and conveniency of the land) should be engaged upon either of the tenures that are published; especially as these Lands, from their particular situation, must become exceedingly valuable, by the Laws which have just passed the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland for improving and extending the navigation of Potomac, as high as is practicable, and communicating it with the nearest western waters

by good roads: and by the former Assembly to do the same thing with James river, and the communication between it and the Great Kanhawa, by means of which the produce of the settlers on these Lands of mine, will come easily and cheaply to market. I am, etc.¹

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 5th. enclosing the Act of the Legislature for vesting in me and my heirs, fifty shares in the navigation of each of the rivers Potomac and James.² For your trouble and attention in forwarding the Act, you will please to accept my thanks; whilst to the Assembly for passing it, these with all my gratitude, are due. I shall ever consider this Act as an unequivocal, and substantial testimony of the approving voice of my Country for the part I have acted in the Amn. theatre, and shall feast upon the recollection of it as often as it occurs to me; but this

Library of Congress

is all I can, or mean to do. It was my first declaration in Congress after accepting my military appointment, that I would not receive any thing for such services as I might be able to render the cause in which I had embarked. It was my fixed determination when I surrendered

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
2. The act is in the *Washington Papers* under date of Jan. 5, 1785.

that appointment, never to hold any other office under Government, by which emolument might become a necessary appendage: or, in other words, which should withdraw me from the necessary attention which my own private concerns indispensably required: nor to accept of any pecuniary acknowledgment, for what had passed; from this resolution, my mind has never yet swerved. The Act therefore, which your Excellency enclosed, is embarrassing to me. On the one hand I shall be unhappy if my non-acceptance of the shares should be considered as a slight of the favor, (the magnitude of which, I think very highly of) or disrespectful to the generous intention of my Country. On the other I should be equally hurt if motives of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness should be ascribed to the action. None of these have existence in my breast, and none of them would I have imputed to me, whilst I am indulging the bent of my inclination by acting independant of rewards for occasional and accidental services. Besides, may not the plans be affected; unless some expedient can be hit upon to avoid the shock which may be sustained, by withdrawing so many shares from them?

Under these circumstances, and with this knowledge of my wishes and intention I would thank your Excellency for your frank and full opinion of this matter, in a friendly way, as this letter to you is written and I hope will be considered. I am, etc.³

3. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To MRS. HANNAH MOORE

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, February 28, 1785.

Madam: I received your favor of the 20th. of January, some considerable time after the date of it. I have never received, nor have I ever heard any thing of Mrs. Savages Will, since your deceased husband put it into my hands, and then reclaimed it in December 1783 as I passed through Baltimore on my way to Virginia, to be sent (for I could see no propriety in any thing else) to the Executors named therein, to act under. I am Madam Yr. etc.³

3. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JAMES KEITH⁹

Mount Vernon, March 1, 1785.

Sir: However much I may wish to see every slur wiped from the character of an officer who early embarked in the service of his Country; and however desirous I may be to alleviate his misfortunes, it is nevertheless incumbent on me to have regard to consistency of conduct in myself. With what propriety then could I, a private Citizen, attempt to undo things which received my

9. Formerly major in the Eighth Massachusetts Regiment.

approbation as a public officer, and this too without the means of information, as the proceedings of Courts Martial are not with me: but if the case was otherwise, I could neither answer it to myself or Country, to retread the ground I have laboriously passed over, was a door of this kind once opened, I should be overwhelmed with applications of a similar nature; for I cannot agree that either the judgment of the Court Martial, or the approbation of it proceeded, as you suppose, from the policy of offering a victim to appease the clamors of the populace. It is unnecessary however to go into arguments upon the subject when, admitting there was error, redress can only be had from the

Library of Congress

supreme Council of the nation, or to the State to which you belong. I am sorry it has been your lott to be brought before a Court, much more so for the issue, and if I could with propriety place you in the full enjoyment of every thing you wish, I shou'd have pleasure in doing it, but it is not in my power in the present instance. I am, etc.¹⁰

To CHARLES McIVER

Mount Vernon, March 1, 1785.

Sir: Whilst I was at Richmond in November last, I received a letter and extracts from you on the subject of emigration. It was put into my hands at a time when I was much engaged, accompanied by many

10. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

other papers, which with them were put by and forgotten, until your second letter reminded me of them. As I do not clearly comprehend your plan, and if I did, as a discussion of it by letter would be tedious and less satisfactory, if you will be at the trouble of calling upon me at any time when I am in Alexandria, or of riding down here; I will give you my sentiments with freedom and candour, when I more fully understand it. I am, etc.¹¹

To REVEREND JOHN WITHERSPOON

Mount Vernon, March 8, 1785.

Revd. Sir: From the cursory manner in wch. you expressed the wish of Mr. Bowie¹⁵ to write the Memoirs of my life, I was not, at the moment of your application and my assent to it, struck with the consequences to which it tended: but when I came to reflect upon the matter afterwards, and had had some conversation with Mr. Bowie on the subject; I found that this must be a very futile work (if under *any* circumstances it could be made interesting) unless he could be furnished with the incidents of my life, either from my papers, or my recollection, and digesting of past transactions into some sort of form and

Library of Congress

order with respect to times and circumstances: I knew also that many of the former relative to the part I had acted in the war between France and G: Britain from the year 1754, until the peace of Paris; and which contained some of the most interesting occurrences of my life, were lost; that my memory is too treacherous to be relied on to supply this defect, and admitting both were more perfect,

15. John Bowie.

11. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

that submitting such a publication to the world whilst I continue on the theatre, might be ascribed (however involuntarily I was led into it) to vain motives.

These considerations prompted me to tell Mr. Bowie, when I saw him at Philada. in May last, that I could have no agency towards the publication of any Memoirs respecting myself whilst living: but as I had given my assent to you (when asked) to have them written, and as he had been the first to propose it, he was welcome if he thought his time would not be unprofitably spent, to take extracts from such documents as yet remained in my possession, and to avail himself of any other information I could give; provided the publication should be suspended until I had quitted the stage of human action. I then intended, as I informed him, to have devoted the present expiring winter in arranging all my papers which I had left at home, and which I found a mere mass of confusion (occasioned by frequently shifting them into trunks, and suddenly removing them from the reach of the enemy); but however strange it may seem it is nevertheless true, that what with company; referrences of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled, applications for certificates, and copies of orders, in addition to the routine of letters which have multiplied greatly upon me; I have not been able to touch a single paper, or transact any business of my own, in the way of accts. and during the whole course of the winter; or in a word, since my retirement from public life.

Library of Congress

I have two reasons, my good sir, for making these communications

to you, the first is, by way of apology for not complying with my promise in the full extent you might expect, in favor of Mr. Bowie. The second is, not knowing where that Gentleman resides I am at a loss without your assistance, to give him the information respecting the disordered state of my papers, which he was told should be arranged, and a proper selection of them made for his inspection, by the Spring. Upon your kindness therefore I must rely to convey this information to him; for tho' I shou'd be glad at all times, to see Mr. Bowie here, I should be unhappy if expectations which cannot be realized (in the present moment) shou'd withdraw him from, or cause him to forego some other pursuits which may be more advantageous to him. My respects if you please to Mrs. Witherspoon. I have the honor, etc.¹⁶

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, March 8, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Since my last to you, I have been favored with several of your letters, which should not have remained so long unacknowledged, had I not been a good deal pressed by matters which could not well be delayed; and because I found a difficulty in complying with your request respecting the profiles; the latter it is not in my power to do now, satisfactorily. Some imperfect miniature cuts I send you under cover with this letter, they were designed for me by Miss D'Hart of Elizabethtown, and given to Mrs. Washington; who in sparing them, only wishes they may answer your purpose. For her I can get none cut yet.

16. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

If Mr. Du' Simitire is living, and at Philada., it is possible he may have miniature engravings of most, if not all the military characters you want, and in their proper dresses: he drew many good likenesses from the life, and got them engraved at Paris for sale; among these

Library of Congress

I have seen Genl. Gates, Baron de Steuben, &c., as also that of your hble servt. The Marqs. de la Fayette had left this before your request of his profile came to hand.

You ask if the character of Colo. John Lawrens, as drawn in the Independant Chronicle of the 2d of Decr. last, is just. I answer, that such parts of the drawing as have fallen under my own observation, is literally so; and that it is my firm belief his merits and worth richly entitle him to the whole picture: no man possessed more of the amor patrice, in a word, he had not a fault that I ever could discover, unless intrepidity bordering upon rashness could come under that denomination; and to this he was excited by the purest motives.

The order¹² alluded to in my private letter, a copy of which you requested, I now send. You might have observed, for I believe the same private letter takes notice thereof, that it was consequent of a resolve of Congress, that Fort Washington was so pertinaceously held, before the Ships passed that Post. Without unpacking chests, unbundling papers &ca., I cannot come at to give you a copy of that resolve; but I well remember that after reciting the importance of securing the upper navigation of the Hudson,

12. See Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, Nov. 8, 1776 (vol. 6, p. 257). (See also Washington's letter to John Augustine Washington, Nov. 6, 1776, p. 244, of the same volume.)

I am directed to obtain hulks, to sink them for the purpose of obstructing the navigation, and to spare no other cost to effect it. Owing to this the Posts of Forts Washington and Lee, on account of the narrowness of the river, some peculiarity of the channel, and strength of the ground at these places, were laboriously fortified; owing to this we left Fort Washington strongly garrisoned, in our rear, when we were obliged to retreat to the White plains; and owing to this, also, Colo. Magaw, who commanded at it, was ordered to defend it to the last extremity. But when, maugre all the obstructions which had been thrown into the channel, all the labour and expence wch. had been bestowed on the works, and the risks we had run of the garrison theretofore, the British Ships of War had, and could pass

Library of Congress

those Posts, it was clear to me from that moment, that they were no longer eligible, and that that on the East side of the river ought to be withdrawn whilst it was in our power: in consequence thereof the letter of the 8th. of Novr. 1776, was written to Genl. Greene from the White plains; that Post and all the troops in the vicinity of it being under his orders. I give this information, and I furnish you with a copy of the order for the evacuation of Fort Washington, because you desire it, not that I want to exculpate myself from any censure which may have fallen on me by charging another. I have sent your recipe for the preservation of young plants to the Alexandria printer; and wish the salutary effect which the author of the discovery, in the annual register has pointed to, may be realized: the process is simple and not expensive which renders it more valuable.

Some Accots. say, that matters are in train for an accommodation

between the Austrians and Dutch; if so the flames of war may be arrested before they blaze out and become very extensive; but admitting the contrary, I hope none of the sparks will light on American ground, which I fear is made up of too much combustible matter for its well-being.

Your young friend¹³ is in high health, and as full of spirits as an egg shell is of meat. I informed him I was going to write to you, and desired to know if he had any commands; his spontaneous answer, I beg he will make haste and come here again. All the rest of the family are well, except Mrs. Washington, who is too often troubled with bilious and cholicky complaints, to enjoy perfect health; all join in best wishes for you and yours with Dr. Sir, &c.¹⁴

To JOHN FILSON

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: It was but a few days ago that I was favor'd with your letter of the 8th. of Feby. accompanied by your Map and history of Kentucke, for which you will please to accept my

Library of Congress

thanks. Those which you expect were handed to me by Mr. Page¹⁷ of Rosewell, are not yet arrived; nor have I heard anything from that gentleman respecting them.

Previous to the receipt of the above letter, I had written to you

13. George Washington Parke Custis.

14. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

17. John Page.

and addressed my letter to the care of Mr. Dunlap printer in Phila., taking it for granted you must have received it 'ere this, I beg leave to refer to its contents, as aught I could say on this subject would be only repetition. I am, etc.¹⁸

To MRS. SARAH BOMFORD

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Madam: I have had the honor to receive your favor, and duplicate, of the 8th. of Octor. from Lisle in Flanders. I have also seen the Will of the deceased Mrs. Savage.

In December 1783 on my quitting public life, and as I was returning to my own home; I met at Baltimore, in Maryland a Mr. Moore, who shewed me this Will; and as it appeared to be the original (for I perfectly recollected the writing of Mrs. Savage), I told him it ought to have been placed in the hands of the Executors therein named, that it might be recorded and acted upon, instead of bringing it to this Country, and proposed to transmit it to them myself for this purpose: he placed it in my hands accordingly, but in less than half an hour reclaimed it; adding that as he was about to sail for Ireland, he would take it there himself. As I knew not by what means he became possessed of this testament, I knew no right by which I could withhold it from him, and therefore returned it; with a request that he would furnish me with a copy thereof, which was done some considerable time thereafter. From

Library of Congress

that period I heard nothing further of Mr. Moore, the Will or anything respecting it, until last month;

18. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

when I received a letter dated Jan: 20th. 1785, from a person at Baltimore subscribing herself, "Hannah Moore", of which the enclosed is a copy, upon the receipt whereof I informed the writer, that neither the Will, or any accot. of it, had reached my hands; nor had I heard a tittle of it since.

I confess there is something in this transaction which carries with it the face of mystery. How it should have happened that Mr. Moore whose name is not once mentioned in the will should become possessed of it: that his widow should be enquiring after it, with the eagerness of a person deeply interested therein; and that the Executors, who *really* are so, first as *principal* legatees, and 2dly. as *residuary* Legatees, shou'd never have written a line on the subject, or made the most distant enquiry after the only property from whence they could derive benefit themselves, or administer it to others agreeably to the testators directions, is unaccountable to me upon any other principle, than that of the Will's never having yet got into their hands.

After assuring you Madam, that I should be happy to render you any services my situation will admit of; I must beg leave to inform you, that you mistake the case entirely, when you suppose that it is in my power to dispose of any part of the deceased Mrs. Savage's property. All that her Trustees could have done, even in her lifetime; was to recover the annuity, which was as unjustly, as ungenerously withheld from her by Doctr. Savage her husband: but with respect to the disposal of it

afterwards, we had no more authority than you: now she has made an absolute distribution of it herself by Will, which her Executors herein named, are to see duly executed. Every lawful and equitable claim therefore, which you may have had against Mrs. Savage in her lifetime, must now be presented to her Executors; for it is they, and they only, (or the Laws

Library of Congress

if they refuse) who can now do you justice. From the words of the Will it would seem to me that the legacy which Mrs. Savage has left you, does not preclude any just charge you may have had against her for board &c., if it was known to be your intention to make it: but this is a matter of which I have not the smallest cognizance, it must be settled between you and the Exors of her Will, when the money can be recover'd from the Estate of Doctr. Savage, who is also dead.

In what state the Suit is, I am unable to inform you. My situation before Peace was established, and engagements since have obliged me to depend wholly upon Mr. Fairfax¹⁹ (the other Trustee) to prosecute it; who, besides the shutting of the Courts at one time, and the litigiousness of them at all times, has had all the villainy of Dr. Savage, and the chicanery of his lawyers to combat. The Doctr., rather than fulfill an engagement, which generosity, justice, humanity and every other motive which should have influenced an honest mind, had recourse to stratagem, and every delay, to procrastinate payment; altho' from report, he has made an immense fortune. I have the honor, etc.²⁰

19. Bryan Fairfax.

20. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To MATHEW CAREY

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: It was my intention, so soon as I understood you meant to become the publisher of a Newspaper at Philadelphia, to have requested that your weekly production might be sent to me. I was the more pleased with this determination when, by a letter from my friend the Marqs. de la Fayette, I found he had interested himself in your behalf.

It has so happened that my Gazettes from Philada., whether from inattention at the printing or post offices, or other causes, come very irregularly to my hands; I pray you therefore to

Library of Congress

fold it like, and give it the appearance of a letter, the usual covering of your Newspapers will do. I have sometimes suspected that there are persons who having stronger desires to read Newspapers than to pay for them, borrow with a pretty heavy hand: this may be avoided by deception, and I know of no other way. I am, etc.²¹

To FREDERICK WEISSENFELS

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: I was favored with your letter of the 21st. of Feby., by the last Post. It never fails to give me pain when I hear of the sufferings of a deserving Officer; in which light I always considered you. It ever has

21. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The text of the original, said to be in Worcester College, Ohio, varies somewhat from this letter, the last sentence being "It has sometimes occurred to me, that there are persons who wishing to read News Papers, without being at the expence of paying for them, make free with those which are addressed to others. Under the garb of a letter, it is not presumeable this liberty would be taken."

been amongst my first wishes, that the circumstances of the public had been such as to have prevented the great loss which both officers and Soldiers have sustained by the depreciation of their certificates; and that each State would do something for those of their respective lines: but having many to provide for, and few places or things to bestow; it is a matter of little wonder that many, very many, deserving characters should go unnoticed, or, to speak more properly, unprovided for.

It has ever been a maxim with me, and it gives regularity and weight to my certificates, to ground them upon the testimony of the Genl. officers under whom the applicant had served: this brings with it dates and circumstances with which I am oftentimes

Library of Congress

unacquainted. In your case it is indispensably necessary; for you having been long out of the Continental line of the army, I cannot speak with precision as to facts. If therefore, as you have been in the service of the State of Nw. York you will forward to me the testimonial of Govr. Clinton, I will gladly accompany it with a certificate of mine, if you think any weight can be added thereby; to do which can only be attended with a little delay, as the letters will come and go free from Postage. With esteem and regard, I am etc.²²

22. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN FILSON

Mount Vernon, January 15, 1785.

Sir: I have been favored with two letters from you:³⁸ that which was first written came last to hand, and neither of them long since. Your history and map of Kentucke I have not yet seen. For the honor you have done me in the dedication of them, you will please to accept my acknowledgments; and for the favourable sentiments you have been so polite as to express for me in both your letters, you have my thanks.

It has long been my wish to see an extensive and accurate map of the Western Territory set on foot, and amply encouraged: but I would have this work founded upon actual surveys and careful observations, any thing short of these is, in my opinion, not only defective and of little use, but serve as often to mislead as to direct the examiner. My sentiments upon this subject are well known to many members of Congress, and to the Legislature of the State in which I have the honor to live: but what steps will be taken by both, or either, to accomplish this useful undertaking, is not for me to say.

Altho' I possess a pretty general knowledge of the Ohio and its waters between Fort Pitt and the Gt. Kanhawa, and have some parts of that Country laid down from actual surveys; yet they are not so connected, nor founded with such precision as to incline me to suffer

Library of Congress

my name to be given as the author of them, or any information in a map or topographical description of the Country, that would not stand the

38. Of Nov. 30, 1784, and Dec. 4, 1784, both of which are in the *Washington Papers*.

test of future examination.

That the river Potomac communicates by short portages (which may be improved to great advantage) with the Yohoghaney and Cheat rivers, (branches of the Monongahela) for the countries East and West of the Apalachian mountains, as James river also does with the waters of the Great Kanhawa, none can deny: and that these will be the channels thro' which the trade of the Western Country will principally come, I have no more doubt of *myself*, than the States of Virga. and Maryland had, when within these few days, they passed Laws for the purpose of extending and improving the navigation of those rivers, and opening roads of communication between them and the western waters.

Whenever business or inclination may bring you to this part of the Country, it would give me pleasure to see you. I am, etc.³⁹

To JACOB GERHARD DIRIKS

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th. of January came duly at hand; but being written in French (a language I do not understand) some time elapsed before an opportunity presented to get it translated. This I hope will be received as an apology for the delay of my answer.

However much your merits deserve recommendation, and however pleasing it might be to me to offer my testimony to such facts as have come to my knowledge, respecting the services you have rendered to these States, yet to comply with your

39. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

request of a letter to the Count de Maasdam,²³ would be inconsistent with the line of conduct I have prescribed for my Government.

It is a maxim with me Sir, to take no liberties with exalted characters to whom I am not personally known, or with whom I have had no occasion to correspond by letter; but if you shou'd think a certificate of service from me can avail you in any degree, and you would please to furnish me with your appointmts. and places of services (as they have not been much under my immediate command) I shall have pleasure in furnishing one.

If circumstances had permitted, I should have been happy in the honor of a visit from you. I have a grateful sense of the polite and flattering expression of your letters; and with best wishes for you in your future pursuits, I have the honor etc.²⁴

***To HUGH WILLIAMSON**

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: It has so happened, that your favor of the 19th. Ult. did not come to my hands until the last mail arrived at Alexandria. By the return of which, I have the honor to address this letter to you.

Mr. McMeiken's explanation of the movements of

23. General in the army of the United Netherlands.

24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Rumseys's newly invented Boat, is consonant to my ideas; and warranted by the principles upon which it acts. The small manual assistance to which I alluded, was to be applied in still water; and to the purpose of steering the vessel. The counteraction being proportioned to the action, it must ascend a swift curr. faster than a gentle stream; and both, with more ease than it can move on dead water. But in the first there may be, and no doubt is, a

Library of Congress

point beyond wch. it cannot proceed without involving consequences which may be found insurmountable. Further than this I am not at liberty to explain myself; but if a model, or thing in miniature can justly represent a greater object in its operation, there is no doubt of the utility of the invention. A view of this model, with an explanation, removed the principal doubt I ever had in my mind, of the practicability of progressing against stream, by the aid of mechanical Power; but as he wanted to avail himself of my introduction of it to the public attention, I chose, previously, to see the actual performance of the model in a descending stream, before I passed my certificate, and having done so, *all* my doubts were done away.

I thank you, Sir, for your accot. of the last Indian treaty. I had received a similar one before, but do not comprehend by what line it is, our northern limits are to be fixed. Two things seem naturally to result from this Treaty. The terms on which the ceded lands are to be disposed of; and the mode of settling them. The first, in my opinion, ought not to be delayed. The second, ought not to be too diffusive. Compact and progressive Seating will give strength to the Union; admit law and good government; and foederal aids at an early period. Sparse settlements in *several* new States; or in a

large territory for one State, will have the direct contrary effects. and whilst it opens a large field to Land jobbers and speculators, who are prouling about like Wolves in every shape, will injure the real occupants and useful citizens, and consequently, the public interest. If a tract of Country, of convenient size for a new State, contiguous to the present Settlements on the Ohio, is laid off, and a certain proportion of the land therein actually seated; or at least granted; before any other State is marked out and no lond suffered to be had beyond the limits of it; we shall, I conceive, derive great political advantages from such a line of conduct, and without it, may be involved in much trouble and perplexity, before any New state will be well organized, or can contribute any thing to the support of the Union. I have the honor &c.

[N.Y.H.S.]

Library of Congress

To ARTHUR LEE

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I had the honor to receive a letter from you dated at Carlisle the 19th. of Novr. last, which should not have remained unacknowledged until this time, if I had known of any opportunity of addressing a letter to you in the Western Territory.

I have now heard of your passing thro' Philada. on your way to Congress, and have been honor'd with a copy of your second treaty with the Western tribes of Indians, from the President. I am pleased to find that the Indians have yielded so much; from the temper I heard they were in, I apprehended less compliance, on their part. This business being accomplished. it would give me pleasure to hear that Congress had proceeded to the disposal of the ceded Lands at a happy medium price, in a District sufficient and proper for a compact State. Progressive seating will be attended with many advantages; sparse settlements with many evils.

I congratulate you on your safe return: the season was inclement and very unfit for the place and business you were engaged in. Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to you, and I have the honor, etc.²⁴

24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, March 19, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Some considerable time ago I wrote a letter to my nephew, Bushrod Washington, and used the freedom of addressing it to your care. At that time I conceived he was living at Richmond, but the establishment of circuit Courts it seems has changed his plan: he now intends to live at Fredericksburg. Will you allow me the liberty my dear sir, to request

Library of Congress

the favor of you to open my letter to him, if it is yet in yr. possession, and comply with a request therein, respecting a promisory note of Mr. Rian's,²⁸ if he is in Richmond; or cause it to be complied with if he is at Petersburg. If my memory serves me, I have gone into the detail of the matter to my nephew. I will not trouble you therefore, with a repetition of it, nor will I take up your time with an apology for the trouble this must give you. Mrs. Washington unites in best wishes for yourself and Mr. Randolph with, Dr. Sir, &c.²⁹

To JOHN HARVIE

Mount Vernon, March 19, 1785.

Sir: If I recollect right, I mentioned when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Mr. Jones's³⁰ the first of last October, that I was reduced to the necessity of bringing ejectments against sundry persons who had taken possession of a tract of Land which I hold, not far from Fort Pitt in the State of Pennsylvania, by Patent under this Governmt. for 2813 acres.

I have lately received a letter from my Lawyer, Mr. Thos. Smith, of Carlisle

28. Ryan. (See Washington's letter to Bushrod Washington, Jan. 22, 1785, *ante*.)

29. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

30. Gabriel Jones, in the Shenandoah Valley.

requesting information on several points; the following are his own words,

I am entirely unacquainted with the manner in which titles to Lands are acquired by improvement or occupancy, by the Laws and customs of Virginia. I suppose it must be under certain conditions and restrictions. I should be glad to have the Laws, if any, pointed out. Does the occupier Forfeit his right of pre-emption, if he does not apply for an office right in a given time? If so, when? By what Laws? Or is it by the regulations established in the Land Office? A certified copy of such regulations if any, may be necessary.

Library of Congress

At the interview I had with that Gentleman in September, he told me it would be necessary to obtain a certified copy of the Surveyors return to the Land office, and of the date of the Warrt. upon which it was made. The latter I presume is in the hands of the Surveyor, but the date no doubt, is recited in the return. Having (in the life time of Colo. Crawford, and by letter from him) received information that at the convention next before the 20th. of Sept. 1776, (the date of his letter) an ordinance passed for the purpose of saving equitable claims to the Western Lands, Mr. Smith requested some precise information respecting this Ordinance, that is, how far it will apply in my case.

After the many obliging acts of kindness I have received from you, and the generous terms upon which they have been rendered, I am really ashamed to give you more trouble; but as the dispute in which I am engaged is of importance, and a very ungenerous

advantage has been taken of a situation in which I could not attend to my private concerns, or seek justice in due season, and as I believe no person can solve the queries of Mr. Smith, and give such accurate information on such points as can be made to subserve my cause as you, I am, however reluctantly, compelled to this application.

Mr. Smith's own words, which I have quoted, and his verbal application to me, wch. I have just now recited, will sufficiently apprise you of what has occurred to him; but I will go further, and take the liberty my good Sir, of giving you a state of the whole matter; from whence you will discover the points on which my opponents mean to hinge the success of their cause.

Colo. Crawford, a liver on Yohioghaney, an old and intimate acquaintance of mine, undertook to procure for me a tract of land in that Country; and accordingly made choice of the one, now in dispute, on the waters of Racoon and Millers runs, branches of Shurtees Creek, surveyed the same, amounting to 2813 acres, and purchased in my behalf the claim of some person to a part of the land, who pretended to have a right thereto. After this he built, or intended to build according to his own accot., and to the best of my recollection,

Library of Congress

(for the papers being in the hands of my Lawyer, I have memory only, and that a bad one, to resort to) three or four cabbins on different parts of the tract, and placed one or more persons thereon to hold possession of it for my benefit. All this preceeded the first view the present occupiers (my opponents) ever had of the Land, as they themselves have acknowledged to *me* , and which I believe can be proved. So far as it respects one cabin there can be *no* doubt, because it remains to this day; and is acknowledged by them to have been on the land when they

first came to it. They built another cabin so close to the door of it, as to preclude the entrance of it: Crawford in his accot. of it to me, says, with a view to prevent occupation: they, on the other hand, say there was no inhabitant in the house at the time. Both may be right, for the fact is, as I have been informed, the owner being from home, this transaction took place in his absence.

It may be well to observe here that Colo. Crawford was only acting the part of a friend to me; for at that time, tho' he was a Surveyor by regular appointment from the College of Wm. and Mary, it was for the local purpose of surveying the 200,000 acres granted by Dinwiddie's Proclamation of 1754 to the Troops of the State, who were entitled to it as a bounty: but as I proposed to cover this survey with a military warrant as soon as circumstances would permit, these steps were preliminary to obtain the Land. Accordingly, a Warrant which I obtained in consequence of a purchase from one Captain Posey (who under the British Kings proclamation of 1763 was entitled to 3000 acres) whose Bond I now have bearing date the 14th. of Octr. 1770, assigning to me all his right to land under it, was located thereon; and Colo. Crawford, after receiving a commission to act as Deputy to Mr. Thos. Lewis, made a return of this survey to his principal, who returned it to the Secretary's office, from whence a Patent issued signed by Lord Dunmore in June or July 1774, for 2813 acres, reciting under what right I became entitled to the Land. Hence, and from the repeated warnings, which it is said can be proved were given at the time my opponents were about

Library of Congress

to take possession of the Land, and afterwards, comes my title.

The title of my opponents I know will be: 1st. That Crawfords survey was illegal, at least, was unauthorized. 2d. That being a great land-jobber, he held, or endeavored to monopolise under one pretence or other much land: and tho' (for they do not deny the fact *to me* in private discussion, altho' considering the lapse of time, deaths, and dispersion of people, I may find some difficulty to prove it) they were told this was my land; yet conceiving my name was only made use of as a cover, and in this they say they were confirmed, having (after some of the warnings given them) searched the Land office of this State without discovering any such Grant to me. 3d. That their possession of the Land, preceded my Patent or date of the Surveyors return to the Secretary's office; or even the date of Crawfords deputation under Lewis, before which, every transaction they will add, was invalid.

But to recapitulate, the Dispute, if my memory for want of papers does not deceive me, may be summed up in these words.

1st. In the year 1771, Crawford at my request looked out this Land for me, and made an actual survey thereof on my account.

2d. Some person (not of the opponents) setting up a claim to part included by the survey, he purchased them out, built one cabbins, if not more, and placed a man therein to keep possession of the Land.

3d. It was called my land, and generally believed to be so by every body, and under that persuasion was left by some, who uninformed of my right, had begun to build, before the present occupants took possession to the exclusion as I have related before of the person placed thereon by Crawford.

Library of Congress

4th. That sometime in Octr. 1773 according to their own accot., these occupants took possession.

5th. That upon their doing so, and at several times thereafter, they were notified of my claim and

intention to assert my right.

6th. That no survey was ever made of this Land, but the first one by Crawford.

7th. That it is declared in the Surveyors return, to be consequent of a warrant granted by Lord Dunmore to Jno. Posey assigned to me. But whether this warrt. is dated before or after possession was taken by my opponents, I know not, but the Survey will shew this.

8th. That after he received his deputation (which I believe was subsequent to their occupancy) he made a return of the survey to Mr. Lewis, who returned it to the Secretary's Office in the early part, I believe, of the year 1774, and a Patent issued without any caveat or opposition from these people.

9th. I believe, because I never heard otherwise, that no office rights either in this State or that of Pennsylvania, were ever obtained by my opponents, resting their title upon possession.

Under this statement of the matter, in which I have conceded everything I know, or which I think can be urged against my claim, I would thank you, as the matter will be determined in another State, for such advice and information of Acts of Assembly, Acts of Convention, or rules of office which make to the point, as my long absence renders me quite an ignoramus in these matters, and as unfit for, as I am disinclined to controversies of this kind.

Library of Congress

If pre-occupancy will take place of legal right, under the circumstances here mentioned; it remains still a question how far the possession and improvements which were made in my behalf, previous to those of my

opponents, will avail me; that is, under what title I should then claim the Land, and under that title how much of it I should hold, supposing one Cabin only to have been built and occupied, by any rule of Office, or Act of Government.

When I look back at the length of this letter, and consider how much trouble I am giving you, I must thro myself upon your goodness for an apology, whilst I assure you of the esteem and regard with which I am, etc.³¹

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, March 20, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I regret very much that your letters of the 2d. and 13th. of Octr. should have been withheld from me until this time, the last post only, from Richmond brought them to me.

If you should have fulfilled your intention of embarking for this Continent at the early period proposed in the first of these letters, (and I hope no untoward accident has intervened to prevent it) this answer will come too late, and my silence will leave you in doubt respecting Horses, besides carrying with it the appearance of inattention. As there is a possibility however that this letter may yet find you in Ireland, I will relate the mode of travelling in this Country, and submit to your own judgment the propriety of depending on it, or bringing Saddle or Carriage horses with you.

From the Southern parts of this State, say from Norfolk, thro' Hampton, Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Alexandria which is

31. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

within a few miles of this place, there is a regular Stage which passes thrice every week, it is neither of the best or worst kind. From Alexandria thro' the Metropolis of every State, Annapolis in Maryland excepted, which is a little to the right of the post road which goes thro' Baltimore. There is also a regular Stage to Portsmouth in New Hampshire, they are of a similar kind, and pass as often as those first mentioned; so that not more than three intervening days can happen between one Stage day and another. A person may therefore, at any time between the first of April and first of December, travel from Richmond (the metropolis of this State) to Boston, in ten or twelve days; and return in the same time. Between this State and Charleston (So. Carolina) no Stages are as yet established, and the Country for the most part being poor and thinly inhabited, accommodations of every kind, I am told are bad. So much for public convenience; and I do not think I should deceive you *much*, was I to add that Sir Edwd. Newenham would find no difficulty to get accommodated, in this and some other States, with the horses and carriages of private gentlemen, from place to place where inclination or business might induce him to go.

What the expence of transporting horses to this country would be, I am unable to say; but I conceive they would not be fit for immediate use if they were brought if the voyage should be long, but at the same time that I deliver this opinion, I must add another, viz: that if you should bring horses, and might not incline to take them back again,

you could, if they were young, likely and well bought, always sell them for their original cost and the charges of transportation; especially if they should happen to be of the female kind.

I have not had the pleasure of seeing either Mr. Rutherford or Capt. Boyle:³² but the latter accompanied your letters and packages (for which I pray you to accept my thanks) with a few lines, giving reasons for their detention, and information of his sailing in the course of a few days. I have in haste, wrote you this letter by return of the Post, hoping it may get to Richmond time enough to receive the conveyance by the Jane and Diana, that it may

Library of Congress

repeat to you if it should arrive in time, the pleasure I shall have in seeing you and your fellow travellers under my roof, and paying you and them every attention in my power.

As the chances are against this letter's finding you in Ireland, I will not at this time, touch upon the other parts of your several favors, but leaving them as matters for oral converse, beg that my respectful compliments in which Mrs. Washinton joins may be presented to Lady Newenham. With very great esteem, etc.³³

32. Capt. John Boyle, jr.

33. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On March 20 Washington wrote briefly to Gov. Patrick Henry, forwarding this letter to Newenham, a copy of which is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, March 27, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Stone gave me your favor of the 20th. When I had the pleasure of seeing you at this place, I informed you fully and truly of my want of money. I am at this moment paying 7 pr. Ct. interest for a pretty considerable sum which I borrowed in the State of Nw. York, thro' means of the Govt.; and not being able to obtain a surety of holding it for more than one year from the establishment of peace, I am in continual fear, notwithstanding the high interest, of having it called in.

After this declaration, it is unnecessary to add how acceptable it would be to me to receive payment of the money due to me from the Estate of your Father, or part of it: but to take it in small driblets from the hands of your Lawyers, would not answer the purpose as it is more than *one* considerable payment I have to make from this fund. If you should go to Congress, I should be glad if the money arising from the arrangement you have made,

Library of Congress

was order'd into the hands of your brother, or your attorney here; and *he* directed to pay it to

me in such sums as I could apply in discharge of my own Debts; for the fact is, I shall receive with one hand and pay with the other, if I may be allowed to use the phrase, (but for which, it would not be required from you). If you do not go to Congress, I shall expect the same from yourself.

My compliments, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Mrs. Mercer. I am, etc.³⁴

To JOHN CRAIG

Mount Vernon, March 29, 1785.

Sir: If I could give you any useful information on the subject of your letter to me, I would do it with pleasure; but, altho' I have a good general knowledge of the Western Country, I am very little acquainted with local situations, and less with those on the Susquehanna than any other. Monongahela, of which Cheat river is a branch, is gentle in its current, easy of navigation, and besides, is supposed, either by the Cheat, or the Yohioganey (which is another branch of it) to approach nearest to, and to afford the best communication or portage with the Atlantic waters of any in all that extensive territory: consequently seats thereon, from this circumstance alone, must be valuable; but the quality of the Land is inferior to none, until you penetrate much further to the Westward, or much lower down the Ohio; and is besides much better settled than any part of the country beyond the Alleghaney Mountains. Upon what terms you could buy (to rent I presume you are not inclined, or the difficulty might be less) a Seat having such conveniences as you want, I am unable to inform

34. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

you. The prices of Land there are rising every day, and if the plan which is now in contemplation for extending the navigation of the Potomac and opening roads of communication short and easy, between it and the waters above mentioned, should be effected, of which I have no doubt, the price will increase much faster.

My compliments. and best wishes to Mrs. Craig, I am, etc.³⁵

To LUCRETIA WILHEMINA VAN WINTER

Mount Vernon, March 30, 1785.

Madam: The honor which your pen has done me so far exceeds my merits, that I am at a loss for words to express my sense of the compliment it conveys.

The Poem,³⁶ in celebration of my exertions to establish the rights of my Country, was forwarded to me from Philada. by Mr. Vogels; to whom I should have been happy to have offered civilities, but he did not give me the pleasure to see him.

At best I have only been an instrument in the hands of Providence, to effect, with the aid of France and many virtuous fellow Citizens of America, a revolution which is interesting to the general liberties of mankind, and to the emancipation of a country which may afford an Asylum, if we are wise enough to pursue the paths wch. lead to virtue and happiness, to the oppressed and needy of the Earth. Our region is extensive, our plains are productive, and if they are cultivated with liberallity and good sense, we may be happy ourselves, and

35. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

36. A letter from Madam Van Winter and her brother, dated Apr. 10, 1784, is in the *Washington Papers*.

diffuse happiness to all who wish to participate.

Library of Congress

The Lady of whom you have made such honorable mention, is truly sensible of the obligation, and joins with me in wishing you every happiness which is to be found here, and met with hereafter. I have the honor, etc.³⁷

To CHARLES THOMSON

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1785.

Dear Sir: In the latter part of last Spring, the Commissioners appointed to attend the embarkations at New York, previous to the evacuation of the city, made a report of their proceedings to me, accompanied by a voluminous list of the Slaves which had left that place. Soon after having the pleasure of Mr. Reeds⁴¹ company here, he informed me in conversation, that the list⁴² I had received was a duplicate of what had been sent to Congress; upon which I filed it with my public papers. By the last Post he says he had been under a mistake, and wished me to forward the papers which are in my hands, to Congress. This I most assuredly would have done, but they are too bulky for the mail, and liable to much injury from the nature of such a carriage. However I will wait your direction, after acquainting you that two of the Commrs. Egbert Benson Esqr. and Lieut. Colo. Smith, with the Secretary Mr. Saml. Inches (and undoubtedly the papers from which the report, and proceedings were founded) are in N: York. If notwithstanding it is necessary to resort to me, the originals (for it is not in my power to make copies) shall be sent; altho it will make a chasm in my files, and disappoint many who apply to them for

37. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

41. Jacob(?) Read.

42. Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

information respecting their negroes. I am, etc.⁴³

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: A few days ago I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 5th. ulto; your other letter of the 26th. of Decr. came duly to hand, and should not have remained so long unacknowledged had I not been in daily expectation of accompanying my answer with a remittance: disappointment followed disappointment, but my expectation being kept alive, I delayed writing from one Post day to another until now, that I am assured by a Mercht. in Alexandria that I may depend upon a Bill, in a few days, upon a Mr. Sylvanus Dickinson of the City of Nw. York, for Two thousand five hundred Dollars. As it is probable I may receive it before the next weeks Post, I will on that occasion write you more fully: At present I will only add the sincere good wishes and best respects of Mrs. Washington to yourself, Mrs. Clinton and family, to which with much truth, mine are united.

With great esteem, etc.

P.S. Since writing the above, I have recd. the enclos'd Bill, the second shall be sent by next Post, when I shall be more particular.⁴⁴

43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

44. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To JAMES DUANE**

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: Enclosed you have my answer to the Acts of your Corporation, which I pray you to present. I thank you for the Arguments and judgment of the Mayor's Court of the City of New York in the Cause betwn. Elizabeth Rutgars and Joshua Waddington,⁴⁷ I have read them with all the attention I could give the subject, and though I pretend not to be

Library of Congress

a competent judge of the Law of Nations, or the principle and policy of the Statute upon which the Action was founded; yet, I must confess, that reason seems very much in favor of the opinion given by the Court, and my judgment yields a hearty assent to it.

It is painful, to hear that a State which used to be the foremost in Acts of liberality, and its exertion to establish our fæderal system upon a broad bottom and solid ground is contracting her ideas, and pointing them to local and independent measures; which, if persevered in, must Sap the Constitution of these States (already too weak), destroy our National character, and render us as contemptible in the eyes of Europe as we have it in our power to be respectable. It should seem as if the Impost of 5 pr Ct. would never take place; for no sooner does an obstinate State begin to relent, and adopt the recommendations of Congress, but some other runs restive; as if there was a combination among them, to defeat the measure.

From the latest European Accts. it is probable an accommodation will take place between the Emperor⁴⁸ and the Dutch, but to reverberate News to a man at the source of intelligence would be idle, therefore Mum.

The Dutch I conceive are too much attached to their possessions and their wealth, if they could yield to the pangs of parting with their Country, to adopt the plan you hinted to Mr. Van Berckel. The Nations of

47. A few papers concerning the case of Elizabeth Rutgers vs. Joshua Waddington are in the *Hamilton Papers* (Legal), 1784, in the Library of Congress.

48. Emperor Joseph II, of Austria.

Europe are ripe for Slavery; a thirst after riches, promptitude to luxury, and a sinking into venality with their concomitants, untune them for manly exertions and virtuous Sacrifices.

Library of Congress

I do not know from whence the report of my coming to Trenton could have originated, unless from a probability of my accompanying the Marquis de la Fayette as far as New York should have caus'd it; he pressed me to the measure, but the season was too much opposed to it, to obtain my consent.

Mrs. Washington and myself, entertain a grateful sense of the kind recollection of us by you, Mrs. and Miss Duane, and the other branches of your family, and beg leave to present our Compliments to, and best wishes for, them all.

With very great esteem, &c.

P. S. If our Rocky-hill acquaintance, Mrs. Vanhorne, has removed (as she talked of doing) to the City of New York I pray you to recall me, in respectful terms, to her remembrance.

[N.Y.H.S.]

To THOMAS FREEMAN

Mount Vernon, April 11, 1785.

Sir: Not having heard a tittle from you since I left Mr. Simpsons in Sepr. last; I wish for the detail of your proceedings in my business since that period, particularly with respect to applications, if any, for my Lands in your neighbourhood or elsewhere, and what has been done with the mill. I have obtained, some time since, a Patent for the round bottom above Captenon,⁵⁴ which may be rented upon the terms of my printed Advertisements.

Mr. Smith (especially as he lives at a distance, and is only in the county at the assizes) should have every assistance in

54. Captening Creek.

Library of Congress

hunting up the evidence necessary for the prosecution of my ejectments in the Court of Washington,⁵⁵ particularly as they respect the improvements in my behalf, intecedent to the possession of the Land by the present occupants; and the notice given them of its being mine, at, or immediately after the Settlements made by them. Colo. John Stephenson, Mr. Marcs. Stephenson and Mr. Danl. Morgan are, I shou'd suppose, most likely to be acquainted with Colo. Crawfords proceedings in this business. It is of consequence to ascertain all the improvements which were made for my use and benefit previous to the settlements of the present possessions. Colo. Crawford in a letter to me says, he built four houses on different parts of the Land; or made four improvements of some kind: if this can be proved it would defeat my opponents upon their own ground.

I should be glad to hear frequently from you. Letters lodged in the post office at Baltimore or Alexa., will not fail of getting safe to my hands. I am, etc.⁵⁶

***To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE**

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

My dear Marqs. Your letter of the 15th. of Septr. last year,⁶⁰ introductory of Mr. Duche, I had the honor to receive a few days since.

However great that Gentleman's merits are, and however much I might

55. Washington County, Pa.

56. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

60. Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

be inclined to serve him, candor required me to tell him, as I now do you, that there is no opening (within my view) by which he could enter, and succeed in the line of his profession, in this Country.

Besides being a stranger, and unacquainted with the language of these States, perfectly, many of them, to prevent an inundation of British Attorneys of which they were apprehensive, and of whose political principles they entertained not the most favorable sentiments; have passed qualifying Acts, by which *residence* and *study* in *them* for a specific time, is made essential to entitle a Lawyer to become a practitioner in our Courts of justice.

Therefore, should Mr. Duche incline, notwithstanding, to settle, altogether, or spend any considerable portion of his time in this Country, his friends cannot serve him better than by obtaining for him some appointment in the Consular departments; for the discharge of which, I presume he must be well qualified.

With great attachment and the most affectionate regard I am etc.⁶¹

To DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

Dr. Sir: The post before last brought me your favor of the 31st. The next day I waited upon Colo. Hooe with your order, but he was confined to his bed and unable to do business. Two days after he sent me a bill on New York for 2,500 Dollars, payable at 15 days sight, and gave me assurances that he would pay the balance shortly. In consequence, you have my receipt for £1069.1.7 specie, at the foot of the enclosed list. I have passed my receipt for a specie payment

61. From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by the Hon. Sol Bloom, of New York City.

Library of Congress

because you desired it; in full confidence however, that if the Bill should not be duly honored, or that I should meet with delay or difficulty in receiving the money at Nw. York, or the balance; that it will be null, or have proper attention paid to the circumstances; for otherwise the interest of this money which was intended to pay a debt in Nw. York will cease, when a higher interest there will be accumulating that debt.

I had taken up an idea, that depreciation was the same thro' the month, and had calculated my demand accordingly: Mr. Richmond varies the depreciation every day, by which his acct. and mine differ £64-14-7-#. I suppose he is right, and that I must submit to the disappointment.

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your ready and pointed attention to this business. Mrs. Washington and Fanny Bassett present their compliments to you, and I pray you to be assured of the sincere esteem and regard with which I am, etc.⁵⁸

To ROBERT LEWIS & SONS

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

Gentn: I have received two letters from you, one of the 8th. of March, the other of the 5th. inst: and thank you for both.

I acquiesce readily to the conditional terms you have made on my behalf with Joseph Davenport: his wages are as high as the best Mills in this Country afford, and the priviledges for

58. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

which he stipulates shall be granted him; with this addition, that his fire wood shall be carted to his door at my expence, and he may raise poultry for his own eating at my cost; but under no pretence *whatever* to sell any.

Library of Congress

I wish the charge of removing him might be stipulated and made as reasonable as possible; otherwise the addition of it to wages and priviledges for a year only, will make him come high to me: for this reason if you entirely approve of him as a miller and man of character, I had rather the agreement should be for two years than one, if he is disposed to engage for that term. At present my Mill has the reputation of turning out superfine flour of the first quality: it commands a higher price in this country and the West Indies, than any other, and I should be unwilling it should lose this character from ignorance or bad conduct.

Roberts (my present Miller) for skill in grinding, and keeping a Mill in order, is inferior to *no* man: owing to this, to the times, and to the aversion I have to frequent changing of people, I have submitted for more than seven years to his impositions: he is also a good Cooper and millwright, he has lived with me near fifteen years, during which period I have not paid a shilling for repairs. He came to me with a full grown apprentice; for both I only paid £80 Pensa. Cury. per Ann: but during my absence he has been encreasing his wages and priviledges in proportion as he faltered in his services; so that I had determined (now that I could look a little into my own business, even if there had been an entire reformation in his conduct) to have reduced his wages and priviledges, or parted with him, to the very standard of your letter; which I believe is as high as the best, and most extensive manufacturing Mills in this State, afford. Mine is but a poor stream, wanting water near half the year: for this reason if Davenport (being a cooper) is to work

at this business (there being a very good shop within fifty yards of the dwelling house and Mill) when he is not engaged in grinding, packing &c., I wish it to be specified. In short, whatever is expected of either, by the other party, I pray may be explicitly declared, to avoid all disputes, misconceptions, after claims and uneasinesses. You know full well what ought to be expected from Davenport; and whatever you engage on my behalf, shall be religiously fulfilled.

Library of Congress

As you must have incurred expence on my accot. in this business, I am ready and willing to discharge it, with many thanks for the trouble you have been at to serve me; and if it should ever be in my power to render you any return, I should be happy in doing it. I am, etc.⁵⁷

***To MATHEW CAREY**

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1785.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 30th. Ultio. If it should ever be in my power to render you any Service, I should be ready, and happy to do it. With the Gentlemen of my acquaintance in Philadelphia, I persuade myself you stand as well, as my introduction could place you. If there are any here, to whom the mention of your case would be of any avail, I should have pleasure in doing it. I thank you for your kind offer of forwarding, with safety, the Gazettes of Philadelphia; but believe there will be no occasion for giving you the trouble at present. I am etc.⁶⁴

57. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

64. From a facsimile of the original in the possession of Edward Carey Gardiner, published in "One Hundred and Fifty Years of Publishing, 1785–1935," kindly furnished by Lea & Febiger, of Philadelphia.

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1785.

Dear Sir: I promised you a letter by the last Post, but it was not in my power to fulfill it; business not my own, and with which I really ought not to be troubled, engrosses so large a portion of my time (having no assistance) that which is essential to me, is entirely neglected.

Library of Congress

I now send you Hooe and Harrisons second Bill upon Mr. Sylvanus Dickenson; altho' I hope, and expect the first will have been paid before it reaches. I also send you a statement of the payments,⁶² as they *ought* to have been made to you, and should be obliged to you for comparing them with your own receipts, and for informing me of their correspondence. The money now remitted I wish to have placed to the credit of my Bond, and the balance, if any, carried to that of the accot. sent me in December last. I should be glad also to have as early and long notice of the call for this last sum, as can knowingly and conveniently be given; for I find it (under my present circumstances) very difficult to raise money equal to the pressure of my wants; those who owed me before the commencement of hostilities, having taken advantage of my absence and the tender laws, to discharge their debts with a shilling or six pence in the pound: and those to whom I owed money, I have now to pay in specie at the real value.

I have to thank you my dear Sir, for the duplicate Deed, and plan of our purchase in the Ochriskeney Patent; and pray you to take the trouble of doing with my moiety the same as you would do with your own at all times and in all respects.

The lime trees which you were so obliging as to send me last November were unfortunate; they lay at Norfolk until the frosts were entirely over, and only came to my

62. A photostat of this statement is in the *Washington Papers*. The original is in the Huntington Library.

hands the 18th. of Feby. I immediately planted, and have since been nursing them; they have yet the appearance of *feeble* life, but I have no expectation of their living. My thanks nevertheless are equally due for these, for the nutts, the corn and the pease; the last of which I sowed yesterday: if I am too late in doing it, the Spring (which has been the most unfavourable I ever knew), and not me, is to blame; if too early, it is from ignorance and my neglect in not making the necessary enquiry for the proper season. The corn I shall begin to plant in a few days and will renew the seeds occasionally.

Library of Congress

I will rely upon your Excely. for the seeds of the Balm tree, White and Spruce Pine. I believe it is the most certain way of raising them: most of the trees evergreen, not sowed where they are to stand, or not raised in Nurseries and early transplanted, are unsuccessful; and tho' our impatience will not suffer us to adopt the practice, it is the opinion of Miller (in his Gardeners Dy.) who seems to understand the culture of Trees equal to any other writer I have met with, that it is the most expeditious method of rearing them. As a quantity of these seeds would be bulky in the Cones, they would be equally good taken out and packed in dry sand; and is the method I would beg leave to recommend. To them I should be glad to have added some of the Hemlock, and indeed any other seeds of trees which are not common in this climate. I shall make no apology for the trouble I know this request must give you, because I persuade myself you will have pleasure in contributing to an innocent

amusement. I have planted within these few days many of the hickory nuts which you sent me, not doubting their successful growth here. Mrs. Washington desires me to present her compliments and thanks to you, for your care of the case of Grotto work, it came very safe. She also joins me very sincerely in congratulating Mrs. Clinton and yourself on her restoration to health, and in wishing it may be of long continuance.

I am sorry for the loss of my Vines, they were of the first quality in France; and sent to me by one of the first characters in it, for abilities, respectability and his curious attention to these things. I was in hopes there had been an abundance, and that you would have participated in the fruit of them.

As you are at the source of intelligence, it would be idle in me to reverberate what is brought by the packets, and we have little of a domestic nature worthy of attention. There are plans in agitation for improving and extending the inland navigation of this country; and opening roads of communication between the heads of the rivers Potomac and James, and the western waters. They have received public countenance and support, but I cannot at this moment speak decisively to the issue, we flatter ourselves it will be favourable,

Library of Congress

but may be mistaken. Mrs. Washington joins me in very best wishes for you and all your family. With regard and attachment, I am, etc.⁶³

63. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM GRAYSON⁶⁵

Mount Vernon, April 25, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I will not let your favor of the fifteenth, for which I thank you, go unacknowledged, tho' it is not in my power to give it the consideration I wish, to comply with the request you have made, being upon the eve of a journey to Richmond to a meeting of the Dismal Swamp company, which by my own appointment is to take place on Monday next; and into that part of the country I am hurried by an express which is just arrived with the account of the deaths of the mother and Brother of Mrs. Washington, in the last of whose hands (Mr. B. Dandridge) the embarrassed affairs of Mr. Custis had been placed, and call for immediate attention.

To be candid, I have had scarce time to give the report of the Committee,⁶⁶ which you did me the honor to send me, a reading, much less to consider the force and tendency of it. If experience has proven that the most advantageous way of disposing of Land, is by whole Townships, there is no arguing against facts; therefore, if I *had* had time I shou'd have said nothing on that head: but from the cursory reading I have given it, it strikes me that by suffering each State to dispose of a proportionate part of the whole in the State, that there may be State jobbing: in other words that the Citizens of each State may be favored at the expence of the Union; whilst a reference of these matters to them has, in my opinion, a tendency to set up separate interests; and to promote the independence of individual States upon the downfall of the federal

65. Delegate to the Continental Congress from Virginia.

Library of Congress

66. Of Congress.

government, which in my opinion is already too feeble, much too humiliated and tottering to be supported without props.

It is scarcely to be imagined that any man, or society of men, who may incline to possess a township, would make the purchase without viewing the Land in person or by an Agent. Wherein then lies the great advantage of having the sale in each State, and by State officers? for from the same parity of reasoning, there should be different places in each State for the accommodation of its Citizens. Would not all the ostensible purposes be fully answered by sufficient promulgation in each State, of the time and place of Sale to be holden at the nearest convenient place to the Land, or at the seat of Congress. Is it not highly probable that those who may incline to emigrate, or their Agents would attend at such time and place? And (there being no fixed prices to the Land) would not be the high or low sale of it depend upon the number of purchasers and the competition occasioned thereby; and are not these more likely to be greater at one time and place than at thirteen? One place might draw the world to it, if proper notice be given: but foreigners would scarcely know what to do with thirteen, to which, or when to go to them. These are first thoughts, perhaps incongruous ones, and such as I myself might reprobate upon more mature consideration: at present however, I am impressed with them, and (under the rose) a penetrating eye, and close observation, will discover thro' various disguises a disinclination to add new States to the confederation, westward of us; which must be the inevitable consequence of emigration to, and the population of that territory: and as to restraining the citizens of the Atlantic States from transplanting themselves to that soil, when prompted thereto by interest or inclination, you might as well attempt (while our Governmts. are free)

to prevent the reflux of the tide, when you had got it into your rivers.

Library of Congress

As the report of the Committee goes into the minutia, it is not minute enough, if I read it a right; it provides for the irregular lines, and parts of townships, occasioned by the interference with the Indian boundaries, but not for its interference with Lake Erie, the western boundary of Pennsylvania (if it is governed by the meanders of the Delaware) or the Ohio river which separates the ceded Lands from Virginia, all of which involve the same consequences.

I thank you for the sentiments and information, given me in your letter of the 10th. of March, respecting the Potomac navigation. My present determination is, to hold the shares which this State has been pleased to present me, in trust for the use and benefit of it: this will subserve the plan, encrease the public revenue, and not interfere with the line of conduct I had prescribed myself. I am, etc.⁶⁷

To CHEVALIER DE LA SERRE⁶⁸

Mount Vernon, May 12, 1785.

Sir: The letter which you did me the honor to write to me the 20th. of last month, I found at this place when I returned from Richmond a few days ago; but it had been previously lost in the high way, and came to me open, and without a cover: by what means it met

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On April 29 Washington left Mount Vernon for Richmond, Va., which he reached on the evening of May 1. He left Richmond May 4, and arrived at Mount Vernon, May 6.

68. Or Terre.

with this accident, I am unable to learn, a neighbour of mine picked it up in the condition I have mentioned, and sent it to me.

Library of Congress

I pray you to be assured Sir, that I should have great pleasure in presenting you with a letter to the Count de Vergennes if I cou'd suppose that my recommendation would have any weight at the Court of Versailles, and if I had ever opened a correspondence with the Minister thereof on a subject of this nature: but not having the vanity to suppose the first, and never having attempted the latter; I persuade myself I shall meet a ready excuse for not complying with your request in this instance.

Not being under such delicate circumstances with my intimate acquaintance and friend the Marqs. de la Fayette, I have communicated your wishes to him; and as no language can do it more emphatically than your own, I have taken the liberty of enclosing your letter to me, to him. I have the honor, etc.⁶⁷

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, May 12, 1785.

My Dr. Marqs. The enclosed letter from the Chevr. de la Serre conveys a strong expression of his wishes; and as you are well acquainted with his merits, his connexions, and his intention of remaining in America, I persuade myself it is unnecessary for me to add more to recommend him to your favourable notice in the line he wishes, and which he finds most convenient for himself to walk in, if the present Consul of France, at Baltimore can be better provided for. I therefore submit his case

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On April 29 Washington left Mount Vernon for Richmond, Va., which he reached on the evening of May 1. He left Richmond May 4, and arrived at Mount Vernon, May 6.

and pretensions to that spirit which I know is ever ready to promote the happiness of others. It is unnecessary to repeat the assurances of my affection and regard for you. You know they cannot be encreased, and will never diminish. Adieu Yrs. &ca.⁶⁹

To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I stand indebted to you for your several favors of the 7th. of March and 12th. and 19th. of April.

Believe me, the first was not productive of more surprize than real concern: the account of your failure was as much regretted, as it was unexpected by me, and I feel for the causes of it, and for your present situation. You are sensible that my commissions have been more troublesome, than profitable to you, and as they are growing less, to continue them might add to your embarrassments, otherwise I do assure you I would continue them with pleasure.

For the many friendly offices you have rendered me, I pray you to accept my thanks. The grass seeds are all at hand, tho' late coming. Mr. Lewis has engaged me a Miller: the method you have taken to get the accot. concerning the Indian meal and flour adjusted, is perfectly agreeable to me; and I approve of what you have done respecting

69. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

my letter to Mr. Lamont, the author of the Poems which were proposed to be dedicated to me. I have never received a paper from Messrs. Claypoole and Dunlap since your mention of their intention to forward them regularly, and think myself so ungenteelly treated in this business, by them, that I never mean to take another of their Gazettes. If they had really sent them, I can conceive no reason why they should not have got to hand as well as those from Carey's, and others from Boston.

The balance of your accot. Curr. £2.3.0½, I have given to Genl. Moylan, who will pay it to you, or your assignees. I have done the same with respect to Claypooles rect. for £3.15.0, cost of printing my advertisement. If you have not already paid his accot. for the Gazettes,

Library of Congress

do me the favor and justice to let him know (when it is done) that I am paying for what I have not had, and that it is my request the accot. may be closed between us; as I do not mean, unless I can be better satisfied than I am at present, to stand longer upon his books.

Mrs. Washington joins me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Biddle and family, and we both hope that fortune may be more propitious to you in future. If it should ever be in my way to render you any services, I shou'd have pleasure in doing it. I am, etc.⁷²

***To THOMAS McKEAN**

Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785.

Sir: I had the honor to receive your letter of the 23d. Ult. by Mr. Pine,⁷³ whose character as a historical and Portrait Painter, and as a friend to the rights of America, has been very favo

72. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

73. Robert Edge Pine.

rably represented to me from England before he made his appearance in this Country. His present design,⁷⁴ if well executed, will do equal credit to his imagination and Pencil; and be interesting to America. I have the honor etc.

[H.S.P.]

***To FRANCIS HOPKINSON**

Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785.

Library of Congress

Dear Sir: In for a penny, in for a pound is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the Painters pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit like patience on a Monument whilst they are delineating the lines of my face.

It is a proof among many others of what habit and custom can effect. At first I was as impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a Colt is of the Saddle. The next time, I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray moves more readily to the Thill, than I do to the Painters Chair. It may easily be conceived therefore that I yielded a ready obedience to your request, and to the views of Mr. Pine.

Letters from England,⁷⁰ recommendatory of this Gentleman, came to my hands previous to his arrival in America; not only as an Artist of acknowledged eminence, but as one who had discovered a friendly disposition towards this Country, for which, it seems, he had been marked.

It gave me pleasure to hear from you. I shall always feel an interest in your happiness, and

74. Pine's project was to paint portraits of the men who took a prominent part in the Revolution and to paint the principal of their movements.

70. Washington's "Diary" states that these letters were from George William Fairfax, Gouverneur Morris, John Dickinson, Francis Hopkinson, and others. The last two, however, were not in England. Washington wrote brief acknowledgments to John Dickinson (May 16) and, presumably, to the others. A photostat of the letter to Dickinson is in the *Washington Papers*.

with Mrs. Washingtons compliments, and best wishes joined to my own, for Mrs. Hopkinson and yourself, I am etc.⁷¹

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM PACA

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, May 18, 1785.

Sir: Mr. Pine who will deliver this letter to your Excellency, is an artist of acknowledged eminence, and one who has given the world many pleasing and forcible specimens of genius: he is engaged in painting some of the interesting events of the late war; in the prosecution of which he finds it necessary to call at Annapolis. I take the liberty therefore of introducing him to your civilities, and of assuring you of the esteem and respect with which I am, etc.⁷⁵

71. The original, from a photostat of which this letter is taken, is stated to be in the New York Historical Society. A similar claim is made by the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. This letter has been facsimiled many times and the different facsimiles are fairly numerous.

75. On May 18 practically the same letter was sent to Edward Lloyd, of Maryland.

To CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND

Mount Vernon, May 19, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 10th. not getting to my hands 'till the 15th., I had no opportunity of writing to you before the meeting of the subscribers on the 17th., at which I exhibited the list you sent me, which was received and acted upon.

Agreeably to the Laws of the two States, the subscription books ought to have been at that meeting; after which all subscriptions are to be made with the President and Directors.⁷⁶ If it should have happened therefore, that any names have been entered on your Books subsequent, and in addition to the list you sent me; it would be proper for such subscribers to enter their names as the Law directs in the Book to be opened by the Directors, in order to give validity to their subscriptions and to prevent disputes; this, I presume, may be done by letter. I am, etc.⁷⁷

76. Of the Potomac Company.

77. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To NATHANAEL GREENE

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1785.

My dr. Sir: After a long and boisterous passage, my Nephew G. A. Washington returned to this place a few days since and delivered me your letter of the 25th. of April.

Under the state of the case between you and Capt: Gunn,⁷⁸ I give it as my decided opinion that your honor and reputation will not only stand perfectly acquitted for the non-acceptance of his challenge, but that your prudence and judgment would have been condemnable for accepting of it, in the eyes of the world: because if a commanding officer is amenable to private calls for the discharge of public duty, he has a dagger always at his breast, and can turn neither to the right nor to the left without meeting its point; in a word, he is no longer a free agent in office, as there are few military decisions which are not offensive to one party or the other.

However just Capt: Gunns claim upon the public might have been, the mode adopted by him (according to your accot.) to obtain it, was to the last degree dangerous. A precedent of the sort once established in the army, would no doubt have been followed; and in that case would unquestionably have produced a revolution; but of a very different kind from that which, happily for America, has prevailed.

It gives me real concern to find by your letter, that you are still embarrassed with the affairs of Banks: I should be glad to hear, that the evil is likely to be temporary only; ultimately, that you will not suffer. From my Nephews account, this man has participated of [*sic*] the qualities of Pandora's box, and has spread as many mischiefs. How came so many to be

Library of Congress

taken in by him? If I recollect right, when I had the pleasure to see you last, you said an offer had been made you of back

78. Capt. James Gunn, of the First Continental Dragoons.

lands, as security or payment in part for your demand. I then advised you to accept it. I now repeat it, you cannot suffer by doing this, altho' the lands may be high rated. If they are good I would almost pledge myself that you will gain more in ten years by the rise in the price, than you could by accumulation of interest.

The Marqs. de la Fayette is safe arrived in France, and found his Lady and family well. From his letters, those of the Chevr. de la Luzerne, Count de Rochambeau and others to me, dated between the middle and last of Feby., I think there will be no war in Europe this year, but some of the most intelligent of these writers are of opinion that the Imperial Court of Russia, will not suffer matters to remain tranquil much longer. The desire of the first to annex the Dutchy of Bavaria to its dominions in exchange for the Austrian possessions in the Netherlands, is very displeasing, it seems, to the military powers, which added to other matters may kindle the flames of a general war.

Few matters of domestic nature are worth the relation; otherwise I might inform you, that the plan for improving and extending the navigation of this river has met a favourable beginning. Tuesday last was the day appointed by Law for the subscribers to meet; 250 shares were required by law to constitute and incorporate the company: but, upon comparing the Books, it was found that between four and five hundred shares were subscribed.

What has been done respecting the navigation of James river I know not; I fear little.

This State did a handsome thing, and in a handsome manner for me; in each of these navigations they gave me, and my heirs forever, fifty shares: but as it is incompatible with my principles, and contrary to my declarations, I do not mean to accept of them. But how

Library of Congress

to refuse them, without incurring the charge of disrespect to the Country on the one hand, and an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on my part on the other, I am a little at a loss: time and the good advice of my friends must aid me, as the Assembly will not meet 'till Octor., and made this gratuitous offer among, if not the last act of the last Session, as if they were determined I should not resolve what to do from the *first* impulse. Mrs. Washington joins me in every good wish for you, and with sentiments of attachment and regard, I am, &c.⁷⁹

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH⁸⁰

Mount Vernon, May 21, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Boulton⁸¹ delivered me your letter of the 13th., last evening: I thank you for sending him to me. I have agreed with him to finish my large room, and to do some other work,⁸² and have no doubt from the character given of him by you, that he will answer my purposes, as he has no one now to lead him into temptation, and will be far removed from improper associates unless he is at much pains to hunt them: it may therefore be expected that he will avoid the rock he has split upon lately.

I thank you sincerely my good Sir, for the offer of such of your imported articles as you have not an immediate call for;

79. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

80. Of Maryland.

81. Richard Boulton, of St. Mary's County, Md.

82. Boulton was to begin work in about 3 weeks. In the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress is a copy of the agreement between Boulton and Washington, dated May 21, 1785, by the terms of which Boulton was to finish "the large room at the North end of the said Washingtons dwelling House (Mount Vernon) in a plain and elegant manner; either

Library of Congress

of Stucco, Wainscot, or partly of both as the said George Washington shall direct...that he will give a Cieling to the Piazza of plain Wainscot...and shall moreover Carve, Turn, Glaze, or Paint (inside work) if...required."

and will take any proportion which will be most convenient for you to share, of the Spirit of Turpentine, oil and paints of all sorts, Lead, Sash, and pullies, of the different sorts and sizes of nails, as also the two plate brass Locks, if Mr. Boulton upon examination, shall think they will answer my room, and of the glass 8 by 10. The large kind of glass does not suit my sashes (which are all made), and a marble slab (indeed two) I am already provided with.

I have promised to send my waggon a cover'd one with lock and key) to Colo. Platers,⁸³ on some landing above, for Mr. Boulton's tools: all, or such part of the articles as I have enumerated and you can spare, and the waggon can bring in addition to the Tools, may accompany them; and the cost and charges of them shall be paid to your order.

Mrs. Washington and the family join me in offering respectful compliments to, and best wishes for you and your Lady, and with very great esteem and regard, I am, etc.

P. S. 'Ere this, I was in hopes of having had it in my power to have offered the service of a Jack, or two, of the first race in Spain, to some of your Mares, if you shou'd be inclined to breed Mules, but they are not yet arrived, another year, I shall be happy to do this.⁸⁴

83. Col. George Plater, of St. Mary's County, Md.

84. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JACQUELIN AMBLER⁸⁵

Mount Vernon, May 22, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: I had the honor to receive your favor of the 12th. in time for the Meeting; and in consequence of the power given me by you, represented the State on the 17th. inst:

I have the pleasure to inform you that the subscriptions (including those in behalf of the two States) amounted to upwards of four hundred shares; consequently the company became legally constituted and incorporated, a president and Directors were chosen, and the business, we persuade ourselves, will be advanced as fast as the nature of it will admit. I have the honor, etc.⁸⁶

***To TENCH TILGHMAN**

Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785.

Dear Sir: The last Post brought me your letter of the 14th., inclosing one of the 30th. of April from Mr. Hollyday. As soon as it is in my power to refresh my memory by having recurrence to my Papers, I will write you, or Mr. Hollyday, more fully on the subject of the legacy in Colo. Colvils Will to Miss Anderson;⁸⁷ or person under whom she claims; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that I have not been able since my retirement, to arrange my Papers, or to attend, in the smallest degree, to my private concerns. The former, from the hurry with which they have been removed from Book cases into Trunks, and sent off to escape the ravages of the enemy, when their Vessels have appeared, are in great disorder. I allotted the last Winter for the adjustment of all these matters; but never could command as much time as

85. Treasurer of the State of Virginia.

86. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

87. Miss Harriet Rebecca Anderson, of London.

Library of Congress

even to *enter* upon the business; and every matter and thing which respects the latter, are in the Situation I left them ten years ago. The numberless applications from officers of the several lines of the Army for Certificates of Service, recommendations, Copies of Orders, references of old matters, with which I ought not to be troubled, in addition to other corrispondencies in which my situation has involved me, confines me more to my writing Desk than I ever was at any period of my life; and deprives me of necessary exercise. These, with other causes, have produced the effect I have mentioned; which I feel more sensibly, as the business of others, with which I have been concerned, is involved; and is now, undergoing the same Suspension, as my own. For sometime past I have been (unsuccessfully) endeavouring to get a single man of good character, and decent appearance (for he will be at my Table and with my Company) to ease me of this burthen; and if you could recommend one of this description, who would not expect high wages (for these I cannot afford) I should be obliged to you for so doing. To suit me, he must be a person of liberal education. a master of composition. and have a competent knowledge of Accts.; for I have those of ten years standing, and the intermediate transactions, to overhaul and adjust.

Will you ever come to see me? You may be assured that there are few persons in the World, whose visits would give more sincere pleasure at Mount Vernon than yours. Nothing could encrease the satisfaction of it more, than bringing Mrs. Tilghman with you; to whom, and to yourself, Mrs. Washington joins in every good

wish with Dr. Sir, etc.

PS. Upon Second thoughts, it occurs, that the Revd. Mr. West of Baltimore, can do all that is necessary for Miss Anderson, without any agency of mine; at least may determine with precision what ought to be done. He is the Executor of his Brother, Mr. John West, who was the *principal* acting Executor of Colo. Thos. Colvil. and has been, I am informed, assiduously employed lately, in adjusting the concerns of that Estate.

Library of Congress

As I shall not write to Mr. Hollyday until I can do it more to the purpose than at present, I will rely upon your communicating what is here mentioned, to him.

I am in want of two inch pine Plank. The man who is engaged to work for me, and who came lately from Baltimore, says he saw a good deal at that place, of the Eastern white Pine, which appeared to him to be seasoned and fit for my uses. If any Vessel should be coming round to Alexandria, and you could send me from two to 500 feet of it, you would oblige me.⁸⁸ Yrs.⁸⁹

[H.S.P.]

To BURWELL BASSETT

Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785.

Dear Sir: It would have given me much pleasure to have seen you at Richmond; and it was part of my original plan to have spent a few days with you at Eltham, whilst I was in the lower parts of the country; but an intervention of circumstances not only put it out of my power to do the latter, but would have stopped my journey to Richmond altogether, had not the meeting (the time and the place) been of my own

88. On July 6 Washington wrote briefly to Tilghman, acknowledging receipt of the lumber.

89. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

appointing. I left company at home when I went away, who proposed to wait my return, among whom a Mr. Pine, an artist of eminence, came all the way from Philadelphia for some materials for an historical painting which he is about, and for which he was obliged to stay 'till I got back, which I did after an absence of eight days only.

My Nephew G. Aug: Washington is just returned from his peregrination; apparently much amended in his health, but not *quite* free from the disorder in his breast. I have understood

Library of Congress

that his addresses to your Daughter were made with your consent; and I now learn that he is desirous, and she is willing to fulfill the engagement they have entered into; and that they are applying to you for permission therefor.

It has ever been a maxim with me thro' life, neither to promote, nor to prevent a matrimonial connection, unless there should be something indispensably requiring interference in the latter: I have always considered marriage as the most interesting event of one's life, the foundation of happiness or misery; to be instrumental therefore in bringing two people together who are indifferent to each other, and may soon become objects of hatred; or to prevent a union which is prompted by mutual esteem and affection, is what I never could reconcile to my feelings; and therefore, neither directly nor indirectly have I ever said a syllable to Fanny or George upon the subject of their intended connexion; but as their attachment to each other seems to have been early formed, warm and lasting, it bids fair to be happy: if therefore you have no objection, I think

the sooner it is consummated the better.

I have just now informed them (the former thro' Mrs. Washington) that it is my wish they should live here.

It is unnecessary I hope to say how happy we should be to see you, her brothers, and any of her friends here upon this occasion (who can make it convenient and are disposed to come); all here join in best wishes for you, and with very sincere esteem etc.⁹¹

To JOHN SWAN

Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785.

Sir: The *little* share I had in the administration of Colo. Colville's Estate, and the time which have elapsed since I had *any* concern at all with the Affairs of it, render me very incompetent to give the information you require.

Library of Congress

Mr. John West deceased was the principal acting Executor of the Will of Colo. Colvill, and the Revd. Mr. West of Baltimore is the executor of John, and has I am told taken much pains to adjust the papers of his brother and the business of that Estate: from him therefore you may probably obtain more precise information of the assets, and of the claimants therefor under the wild devises of the Will, than is in my power at this time to give you.

All I recollect of the matter is, that the devises to certain persons in England; relations of the Testator, were so indefinite, and stirred up such a multitude of claims, that it was adjudged necessary for the safety of the Executor when the surplus Estate (if any) should be ascertained, to deposit the same in the hands of the Chan

91. Ford's text varies in numerous points from this "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. He does not state his source.

cellor to be disposed of to the rightful owner, upon due proof of their identity before him. What may have been the surplus, if the accots. have been finally settled; what has been done with it, or under what predicament it may have been placed by the Laws of this Government, I have it not in my power, without a good deal of research, to inform you; not having been able to look into this business any more than into that which more immediately concerns my own, since my return to private life. for eight years previous to it, it is well known I could not. I am, etc.⁹⁰

To GOVERNOR DAVID PARRY⁹²

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor, lately, to receive your favor of the 18th. of July last year. For the politeness with which your Excellency was pleased to receive my nephew G: A. Washington, and for the distinguished marks of attention which you shewed him whilst he was in the Island of Barbadoes (for which he retains a grateful sense) I feel myself

Library of Congress

exceedingly obliged, and should be happy in opportunities to convince your Excellency of the impression they had made on me.

My nephew, after a peregrination thro' many of the W. India Islands, spending some time in Bermuda, and the winter in Charleston (So. Carolina) returned home a few days ago, a good deal *amended* in his health, but not

90. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

92. Of Barbados, West Indies.

perfectly restored to it. I have the honor, etc.⁹³

To ROBERT LEWIS & SONS

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1785.

Gentl: In consequence of your letter of the 5th. of last month, I discharged Wm. Roberts from my Mill. It now is, and has been for some time past without a Miller; and as Mr. Davenport from your Accot. would be ready to take charge of it in about three weeks (now seven), and not yet come, nor any reason given why he has not; I am apprehensive of some disappointment.

If this is the case I should be glad to know it as soon as possible. One Baker, who referred to you for a character, and was employ'd by Colo. Biddle at his Mill at Georgetown, has applied to me; but considering myself under engagement, I gave him no encouragement. A person who writes the enclosed letter has also offered, but I have given him no answer. Some others have likewise made application, but as I depended upon Davenport I asked for no character nor enquired into their qualifications. If Davenport should have disappointed me, would Baker answer my purpose? Would Reynolds do better? Or have

Library of Congress

you any other in view which you think preferable to both? I am sorry to give you so much trouble with my affairs but hope you will excuse it. I am Genth, etc.⁹⁴

93. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

94. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM MINOR

Mount Vernon, May 27, 1785.

Sir: My objection to paying your account when here, was, now is, and, whether it is done or not, will be: that it comes neither under the letter nor spirit of my letter to Mr. Baker. My object was to give Lawce. Posey⁹⁵ a years schooling, to fit him for some of the better occupations of life: to do this, I agreed to pay his board also, both of which together, I was inform'd would amount at the free school, to £17, Md. Curry. What followed? Why he neither went to the School, nor boarded with the person under whose care he was intended to be put, *this by your own confession* . Is it just, is it reasonable then that I should look *back* to expences which had been incurred previous to the date of my letter; nor even *forward* to what might be incurred, if the end which I had in view was not to be answered by it? If the child did not go to the school nor derive the benefits which were intended him from it, could it be supposed I meant to pay for his board without; when his fathers House and eye were more proper than any other? Might he not as well have been at home with his father, as at any other place idle? Upon these grounds it was and under this state I repeat it, that if there is a disinterested man upon Earth, who will say I ought to comply with your request, I will do it: and you may have the chusing of him or them; for it does not suit me to go from home on this business. I am, &c.⁹⁶

95. A son of John Posey.

96. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN HARVIE

Mount Vernon, May 31, 1785.

Sir: I am informed that a patent (in consequence of a Certificate from Commrs. appointed to enquire into, and decide upon claims for settlement of the Western Lands) is about to issue to the heirs of Michl. Cresap, from the Land Office of this Commonwealth, for a tract of land on the river Ohio formerly in Augusta County, now commonly called and distinguished by the [name of] Round bottom: against granting which to the heirs of the said Cresap, I enter a Caveat for the following reasons; First, because this Land was discovered by me in the month of Octor. 1770, and then marked; which was before, as I have great reason to believe, the said Cresap, or any person in his behalf had ever seen, or had the least knowledge of the tract. Secondly, because I did at that time, whilst I was on the Land, direct Captn. (afterwds. Colo.) Willm. Crawford to survey the same for my use, as a halfway place or stage between Fort Pitt and the 200,000 acres of land which he was ordered to survey for the first Virginia regiment agreeably to Govr. Dinwiddie's Proclamation of 1754. Thirdly, because consequent of this order he made the survey (this survey is either in the hands of the county Surveyor of Augusta, or with my agent in the Westn. Country: it is not to be found among my papers; tho' I am sure of the fact, and will procure it if necessary) in the month of the year following for 587 acres, and returned it to me accordingly: and equally certain I am that it was made before Mr. Cresap or any person in his behalf had ever stretch'd a chain thereon, knew of, or, as I have already observed, had taken a single step to obtain the land. Fourthly, because subsequent of this survey; but previous to any claim of Cresaps, a certain Dr. Brisco possessed himself of the Land, and relinquished it, after I had written him a letter in the words contained in the inclosure No. 1.97

97. See Washington's letter to Dr. John Brisco, Dec. 3, 1772, *ante*.

Library of Congress

Fifthly, because upon the first information I received of Cresaps pretentions, I wrote him a letter, of which No. 2 is a copy.⁹⁸ Sixthly, because it was the practice of Cresap, according to the information given me, to notch a few trees, and sell as many bottoms on the river above the Little Kanhawa as he could obtain purchasers, to the disquiet and injury of numbers. Seventhly, Because the Commrs. who gave the Certificate under which his heirs now claim, could have had no knowledge of my title thereto, being no person in that District properly authorised; during my absence, to support my claim. Eighthly, Because the survey, which was made by Colo. Crawford, who was legally appointed by the Masters of Wm. and Mary College for the purpose of surveying the aforesaid 200,000 acres, is expressly recognized and deemed valid by the first section of the Act, entitled an Act, see *the Act* ; as the same was afterwards returned by the surveyor of the county in which the Land lay. Ninthly and lastly, Because I have a Patent for the said Land, under the seal of the said Commonwealth signed by the Governr. in due form on the 30th. day of Octor. 1784; consequent of a legal Survey made the 14th. of July 1773 as just mentioned, and now of record in the Land Office.

For these reasons I protest against a Patent's issuing for the Land for which the Commissioners have given a Certificate to the Heirs of Mr. Cresap so far as the same shall interfere with mine: the legal and equitable right thereto being in me.

If I am defective in form in entering this Caveat, I hope to be

98. See Washington's letter to Michael Cresap, Sept. 26, 1773, *ante*.

excused, and to have my mistakes rectified, I am unaccustomed to litigations; and never disputed with any man until the ungenerous advantages which have been taken of the peculiarity of my situation, and an absence of eight years from my country, has driven me into Courts of Law to obtain common justice. I have the honor, etc.⁹⁹

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, June 2, 1785.

Dr. Sir: As your letter of the 30th. ulto. did not reach me until late this afternoon, and as the Post goes from Alexandria at four o'Clock in the morning, I have scarcely a moment (being also in company) to write you a reply. I was not sufficiently explicit in my last: the terms upon which Mr. Falconer came to this Country are too high for my finances and (to you, my dear Sir, I will add) numerous expences. I do not wish to reduce his, perhaps well founded, expectations; but it behooves me to consult my own means of complying with them.

I had been in hopes that a young man of no great expectations might have *begun* the world with me, for about fifty or sixty pounds pr. ann: Virga. curry: but for one qualified in all respects to answer my purposes, I would have gone as far as £75, more would rather distress me.

My purposes are these; to write letters agreeably to what shall be dictated; do all other writing which shall be entrusted to him; Keep accounts; examine, arrange and properly methodize my Papers which are in great disorder; ride, at my expence, to do such business as I may have in different parts of this or the other States, if I should find it more

99. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

convenient to send, than attend myself, to the execution thereof: And, which was not hinted at in my last, to initiate two little children (a girl of 6 and a boy of 4 years of age, descendants of the decd. Mr. Custis who live with me and are very promising) in the first rudiments of education: this, to both parties, would be mere amusement, because it is not my desire that the Children should be confined closely. If Mr. Falconer should incline to accept the above stipend, in addition to his board, washing and mending; and *you* (for I wou'd rather have your *own opinion* of the gentleman, than the *report* of a thousand others in his favor) upon a close investigation of his character, temper and moderate political

Library of Congress

tenets (for supposing him an English man, he may come with the prejudices and doctrines of his Country) should find him competent to the duties above mentioned, the sooner he comes the better my purpose would be promoted.

If I had had time, I might have added more; but to you it would have been unnecessary: you know my wants, you know my disposition, and you know what kind of a man would suit me. In haste I bid you adieu, with assurances of great regard, and sincere friendship, I am, &c.¹

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JAMES RUMSEY

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 10th. of March came safe, but not in a short time after the date of it. The reason which you have assigned for giving me an order on Mr. Ryan, is perfectly satisfactory. I wish that that or any other, expedient would have extracted from him what he owes you. From the Accot. given of his circumstances and conduct I fear you have incurred a bad debt with the manager of the Theatre.

As the large house you was to build for me,⁵ was in such forwardness at the date of the above letter, and as you expected to have had it raised by the first of May last; I am very well satisfied with the advance it has made, and that it should continue, provided you can make it convenient to wait a while for your money; but I should be wanting in candor were I to give you assurances of speedy payment. The Kitchen and stable I would gladly have finished as soon as possible and what ever the cost of them amounts to, I will settle for without delay.

It gives me much pleasure to find, by your letter, that you are not less sanguine in your Boat project, than when I saw you last; and that you have made such further discoveries

Library of Congress

as will render them of greater utility than was at first expected: you have my best wishes for the success of your plan.

Inclosed are the proceedings of the Directors of the Potomac navigation. I pray you to have them set up at some public place. If the manager advertised for, can come *well* recommended, liberal wages will be given him. It were to be wished that the following qualities could be readily combined in the same person, integrity, abilities, indefatigable industry, and if he has not experimental knowledge of this particular kind of work, at least that he may be possessed

5. In Bath, or Warm Springs, Va.

of a genius which may soon fit him for it.

Mr. Ryan's note is enclosed, and I am with great esteem, Sir, etc.6

To WILLIAM CARMICHAEL

Mount Vernon, June 10, 1785.

Sir: It is with grateful pleasure I sit down to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 25th. of March covering a triplicate of your letter of the 3d. of December (which is the first that has been received), and a copy of the Count of Florida Blanca's note to you.

I feel myself under singular obligation to you sir, as the mean of procuring two lacks of the first race, to be sent me; but my gratitude for so condescending a mark of esteem from one of the first

6. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

crowned heads in Europe, calls for a better expression than I have, to make suitable acknowledgments to His Catholic Majesty; especially too as his Majesty's very valuable

Library of Congress

present was accompanied by a sentiment of approbation which cannot fail of making a lasting impression on my mind, and of becoming very dear to my remembrance.

It is to you Sir, I must stand further indebted for the manner of making known in terms most acceptable, the high sense I entertain of the King's goodness. The Jacks are not yet arrived, but I hope they soon will; and the accot. which you mean to transmit, of the mode of treating them for the propagation of mules, will be equally necessary and acceptable, for my management of them.

Mr. Gardoqui is safely arrived at Philada. I have not had the honor of paying my compliments to him; but, as well for the respect I owe his sovereign, and his own great merit, as on acct. of your recommendation of him, I shall be happy in every opportunity which shall offer of shewing him all the attention in my power.

Great Britain, viewing with eyes of chagrin and jealousy the situation of this country, will not, for sometime yet if ever, pursue a liberal policy towards it; but unfortunately *for her* the conduct of her ministers defeat their own ends: their restriction of our trade with them, will facilitate the enlargement of Congressional powers in commercial matters, more than half a century wou'd otherwise have effected. The mercantile interests of this Country are uniting as one man, to vest the federal government with ample powers to regulate trade and to counteract the selfish views of other nations: this may be considered as another proof that this Country will ever unite in opposition to unjust or ungenerous measures, whensoever or from whomsoever they are offered. I have the honor, etc.⁷

7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM GODDARD

Mount Vernon, June 11, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: On the 8th. inst: I received the favor of your letter of the 30th. of May:⁸ In answer to it I can only say, that your own good judgment must direct you in the publication of the manuscript papers of Genl. Lee. I can have no request to make concerning the work.

I never had a difference with that Gentleman but on public grounds, and my conduct towards him upon this occasion, was such only, as I conceived myself indispensably bound to adopt in discharge of the public trust reposed in me. If this produced in him unfavourable sentiments of me, I yet can never consider the conduct I pursued, with respect to him, either wrong or improper; however I may regret that it may have been differently viewed by him, and that it excited his censure and animadversions. Should there appear in Genl. Lee's writings any thing injurious or unfriendly to me, the impartial and dispassionate world, must decide how far I deserved it from the general tenor of my conduct.

I am gliding down the stream of life, and wish as is natural, that my remaining Days may be undisturbed and tranquil; and conscious of my integrity, I would willingly hope that nothing would occur tending to give me anxiety; but should any thing present itself in this or any other publication, I shall never undertake the painful task of recrimination, nor do I know that I should ever enter upon my justification. I consider the communication you have made as a mark of great attention, and the whole of your letter as a proof of your esteem. I am, &c.⁹

8. This letter is in the *Washington Papers*, as is also the printed prospectus of the proposed publication. Lee bequeathed his papers to Goddard and these were to have formed the basis of the work which Goddard never published.

9. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To SAMUEL POWEL

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, June 15, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 25th. of April, but have not yet had the pleasure of seeing Doctr. Moyes; on the 22d. inst: I shall look for him.

I pray you to be assured that it is unnecessary for you to apologize to me for the introduction of any Gentleman, of whom you entertain a favourable opinion: such as you conceive worthy of my civilities, will always meet a welcome reception at Mt. Vernon.

I shall now my good Sir, give you a little trouble. A Gentleman whose person, whose name,¹¹ and whose character are equally unknown to me has written me the enclosed letter, to which, as yet I have made no reply. The work if well executed would unquestionably be valuable and ought to be encouraged; but the abilities of the author I am a stranger to, and it has been too often found that similar attempts, by persons whose reputations not established in the literary world, are founded in ignorance, or end in imposition:

11. Charles Vancouver.

to encourage the first, or to give sanction to the latter would be alike disagreeable to me. I would beg therefore, if it is not likely to be attended with much trouble, that you would be so obliging as to give your own, and the sentiments of others on the Author and his performance, that I may be enabled to decide properly with respect to his request.

My respectful Compliments and best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Mrs. Powel and yourself, and I am, Dr. Sir, etc.¹²

To EDMUND RICHARDS

Mount Vernon, June 15, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: Your letter of the 1st. of Feby. from Plymouth Dock, came safe. In explicit terms I assure you, that the information which I suppose you must have received respecting a Will, and the plantations of a Mr. Richd. Richards, is without the smallest foundation. I never heard of the man, his Will, or the Estate which you say was left in my hands, until your letter reached me: equally unacquainted am I with Lawyer Haines or Lawr. Briton, consequently can give you no satisfaction in any of the matters requested of me.

If any such event as you speak of ever did happen with any of my name, it is unknown to me, it is not in my power therefore to give you any clue by which you may pursue your enquiries, or I would do it with pleasure. I am, etc.¹⁰

12. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

10. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ROBERT HOWE

Mount Vernon, June 15, 1785.

Dr. Sir: A few days ago Mr. Sitgreaves¹³ gave me the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 4th. of May. It is the only one I recollect to have had from you since my return to private life.

It gives me pleasure to hear that Congress have dealt honorably by you, and mean to do more; it is devoutly to be wished that they could do the same by all the officers whose meritorious services and sufferings have a just claim upon their gratitude, and call loudly for their exertions.

As you are at the source of intelligence, anything I could say respecting foreign matters, would only be a reverberation of intelligence; and few things occur of a domestic nature worthy of recital. Mrs. Washington is in tolerable good health and joins me in compliments

Library of Congress

and best wishes for you, Mr. Lots¹⁴ family, and others of our old acquaintance. I am,
etc.¹⁵

To WILLIAM MINOR

Mount Vernon, June 16, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 14th. is this moment delivered to me. Moral obligations, or the obligations of humanity therefore induced me to bestow a years schooling on Lawce. Posey, and to effect it I was willing to incur the expence of a years board also; the same motives might have induced you, without making a charge of it against me, to have acted a similar part in other respects by the boy; for sure I am, my connexion with him was not stronger, nor legal honorary obligation

13. John Sitgreaves. He was a Delegate to the Continental Congress from North Carolina.

14. Abraham Lott, of New York City.

15. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

greater on me than on any other mans to excite them. Schooling, I reiterate in this letter, as I urged in my former, was my object; consequently, if he did not go to the Free School in Queen Anne, (the place designed) as you yourself acknowledged to me, nor to any other School, for what purpose let me ask was I to pay £17? Was not his Fathers house, if time was to be misspent, the best place for him to waste it in? Can it be supposed I ever had it in contemplation to board him out for the purpose of idleness? If then the condition of my letter to Mr. Baker were never complied with, as you candidly confessed to me they were not when here, where is the justice of requiring £17, or an iota of it from me, when the compensation was expressly stipulated? But I will be done. I am too much engaged in company and in business to go further into the detail of this matter.

Library of Congress

If Genl. Robardeau¹⁶ (whom you mentioned to me yourself in a former letter) will be so obliging as to undertake to determine the point, I shall be perfectly satisfied with his decision. I shall expect however that both this letter, and my former to you which was directed to his care, and such papers as you exhibited to me, will be laid before him, one of which certified that Lawce. Posey was not at the Free school: another, in effect that your charge was antecedent to the date of my letter to Mr. Baker, and a third, from Capt. Posey to you, which will serve to prove that he was a House-Keeper at Rovers-delight (as he call'd his place) at the time you want me to pay you for the boy's board, when he was not at school, nor ever derived the benefit which was the object of my benevolence. I am, etc.¹⁷

16. Daniel Roberdeau.

17. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE SECRETARY AT WAR**

Mount Vernon, June 18, 1785.

My dear Sir: I am quite ashamed to be so long deficient in acknowledging the receipt of your favors of the 24th. and 29th. of March, and 5th. of May; but an intervention of circumstances (with the enumeration of which I shall not trouble you) have prevented it.

It gave me great pleasure to hear of your appointment as Secretary at War. without a complimt., I think a better choice could not have been made, and though the Salary is low, it may, under the circumstances you mention, be considered as auxiliary. Inclosed is a certificate¹⁸ of Service for Major Sergeant,¹⁹ of whose worth I have a high opinion; but for want of a more competent knowledge of the time of his entering the line of the Army, and of the Commissions he has borne, I could not be more particular. At any time this Summer, the Limestone would be useful to me; but the sooner it comes the greater benefit I shall

Library of Congress

18. A copy of this certificate, dated June 18, 1785, is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

19. Winthrop Sargent.

derive from it, as the Walls for which I want it, are now in hand. The sentiment which you have dropped respecting the appropriation of the shares which were intended for me, by the Assembly of this State, in the Navigations of the Rivers Potomack and James, is very pleasing; and would give me great pleasure to see it realized.²⁰

For want of a competent view of the designs of Congress respecting the Western Territory; and not knowing how matters stand with Great Britain, respecting the Posts of Detroit and other places at present occupied by British Garrisons, on the American side of the Line; I feel an unfitness to answer your question respecting such Posts as may be proper for the purposes you mentioned; but under the ideas I hold at prest, I am inclined to think that if Garrisons are to be established within the limits and jurisdiction of any of the 13 States, the Fort Pitt, or Fort McIntosh,²¹ whichever shall be found most convenient and in best repair, would suit very well for a Post of deposits; from whence *all* the others should be supplied. and as it is my opinion that great part of the Fur and Peltry of the Lakes (when we shall have free access to them) will be transported by the Cayahoga and big beaver Creek, a Post at the mouth of, or at some convenient Post on the former, must be eligible. The spot marked Miami village and Fort in Hutchins's map, I have always considered as of importance, being a central point between Lake Erie, Lake Michigan, and the river Ohio; communicating with each, by Water. To these the Falls of the Ohio, or some more convenient spot for the lower settlements, may be added. Whether this chain embraces territory enough,

20. Knox had written (March 24: "Perhaps my dear Sir you could intimate to the Legislature in a manner which would be clear of every indelicate imputation that should they think proper to apply the produce of this fund to the maintenance of Widows, and the

Library of Congress

support, and education of the children of those men of their own line who sacrificed their lives in defence of their Country, and of the maimed soldiers, that the measure would rear an eternal monument to the virtue of the Commonwealth of Virginia.” Knox's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

21. On file Ohio River, 25 miles below Pittsburgh, Pa.

whether it goes far enough to the Southward to afford protection to the back parts of Virginia the Carolinas and Georgia; or whether these are objects which are meant to be comprehended, are for those who are more behind the Curtain than I am, to determine. My opinion of the matter is, that I have described a sufficient extent of the Country to answer all our *present* purposes; beyond which, neither Settlements nor Locations of Land ought to be admitted; because a larger would open a more extensive field for Land jobbers and Speculators. Weaken our Frontiers. exclude Law, good government, and taxation to a late period. and injure the union very essentially in many respects.

At the conflux of the Great Kanhawa and Ohio, a Post might be established so as to answer beneficial purposes. Indeed it is the opinion of many, that it is a more eligible place than Pittsburg. In time, if the navigation of the Kanhawa should be extended, and an easy communication opened with James River, it may be so; but in the present state of things, considering the Settlements about the latter, and the sources from whence proceed all the Supplies of that Country, it certainly is not. As a protection of the River, and the movements thereon, it is desirable.

If I am right in my principles some such distribution as the following may not be ineligible for the 700 men which are ordered to be raised. At Fort Pitt, Fort McIntosh, or the Mouth of big Beaver (being in the vicinity of a thick settlemt.) only 100 Men. Cayahoga, from whence a Detachment might occupy the carrying place between that water and big Beaver; being on the line, and most exposed, should have 200. Miami Fort, or Village

Library of Congress

and Dependencies, Do. Do. 200. At the Falls of the Ohio, or some spot more court. and healthy, on that river 150. At the Conflux of the Great Kanhawa and Ohio

for security of the River, protection of Trade, and covering emigrants, 50. Total 700.

Mrs. Macaulay Graham and Mr Graham, and others, have just left this, after a stay of about 10 days. A Visit from a Lady so celebrated in the Literary world could not but be very flattering to me.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for yourself, Mrs. Knox and family; with great truth and sincerity I am etc.

[MS.H.S.]

To BARBÉ MARBOIS

[June 21, 1785]

Sir: The last Post brought me the honor of your favor of the 12th. inst: I am made happy by occasions which induce you to write to me, and shall take pleasure in rendering Mr. De Corney²² any service in my power. I will immediately inform myself of the name and residence of the Treasurer of the Society of the Cincinnati in this State, and transmit Mr. De Corney's Bill on Colo. Wadsworth²³ to him.

I am obliged to you Sir, for the several communications in your letter. I wish something disagreeable may not result from the contentions respecting the navigation of the river Mississippi; the emigration to the waters thereof is astonishingly great, and chiefly from a description of people who are not very subordinate to the Laws and Constitution of the States they go from; whether the prohibition of the Spaniards therefore is just or unjust, politic or impolitic, it

22. Louis Dominique Ethis de Corny.

Library of Congress

23. Jeremiah Wadsworth.

will be with difficulty that a people of this class can be restrained from the enjoyment of natural advantages. It is devoutly to be wished that Mr. Gardoqui would enter into such stipulations with Congress as may avert the impending evil, and be mutually advantageous to both nations.

After the explicit declarations of the Emperor respecting the navigation of the Scheldt, and his other demands upon Holland, it should seem I think, as if he stood in a predicament not very desirable; for if he recedes, his foresight and judgment may be arraigned; and if he proceeds, his ruin may be involved. But possibly I am hazarding Sentiments from a superficial view of things, when it will appear ultimately that he has had important objects in view, and accomplished them.

I take the liberty of addressing the enclosed letter to your care, and to assure you of the respect and esteem with which I have the honor, etc.²⁴

To WILLIAM GRAYSON

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Since my last to you I have been favored with your letters of the 5th, 27th, and — of May, and beg your acceptance of my thanks for their enclosures, and for the communications you were pleased to make me therein.

I am very glad to find you have pass'd an Ordinance of Congress respecting the sale of the Western Lands: I am too well acquainted with the local politics of individual States, not to have foreseen the difficulties you met with in this business; these things are to be regretted, but not to be altered until liberallity of sentiment is more uni

Library of Congress

24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The original of this letter is said to be (1934) in the Historical Museum, Leningrad, U. S. S. R.

versal. Fixing the Seat of Empire at any spot on the Delaware, is in my humble opinion, demonstrably wrong: to incur an expence for what may be call'd the *permanent* seat of Congress, at this time, is I conceive evidently impolitic; for without the gift of prophecy, I will venture to predict that under any circumstance of confederation, it will not remain so far to the Eastward long; and that until the public is in better circumstances, it ought not to be built at all. Time, too powerful for sophistry, will point out the place and disarm localities of their power. In the meanwhile let the widow, the Orphan and the suffering Soldier, who are crying to you for their dues, receive *that* which can very well be rendered to them.

There is nothing new in this quarter of an interesting nature, to communicate, unless you should not have been informed that the Potomac navigation proceeds under favourable auspices: At the general meeting of the subscribers in May last, it appeared that upwards of 400 of the 500 shares had been engaged; many more have been subscribed since; a Board of Directors have been chosen, proper characters and Labourers advertized for, to commence the work in the least difficult parts of the river, 'till a skillful Engineer can be engaged to undertake those which are more so; and it is expected the work will be begun by the 10th. of next month. With great esteem, &c.28

28. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN RUMNEY25

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I stand indebted to you for two letters, one of the 8th. of September, the other of the 9th. of Feby., the first should not have remained so long unacknowledged, but for the

Library of Congress

expectation I had of the second, the second led me to expect a third, upon the receipt of which I meant to give you but one trouble by replying to them all at the same time.

Permit me to thank you Sir, for your attention to my Commissions: the joiner arrived safe, and I believe will fully answer your description and expectation of him; he gives great satisfaction, and seems well satisfied himself. The expence of his passage, and your advance to him, has been paid to Mr. Sanderson.²⁶

I delayed making choice of either of the samples of Flagstone, until I had seen the Irish marble, and was made acquainted with the cost of it; but as it is not yet arrived, and I like the whitest and cheapest of the three samples wch. you sent me by Capt. Atkinson, I request the favor of you to forward by the first opportunity (with some to spare in case of breakage or other accidents) as much of this kind as will floor the Gallery in front of my house, which within the margin, or border that goes round it, and is already laid with a hard stone of the Country, is 92 feet 7½ inches, by 12 feet 9¼ inches.

Having given the exact dimension of the floor or space which is to be laid with flagstone, I shall leave it to the workman to procure them of such a size (not less than one foot square, and all of one size) as will answer best, and accord most with the taste of the times. I take it for granted that 7½d of 8d is the price of the white Stone in the prepared state in which it was sent, and that shipping charges and freight only, are to be added to the cost: if a rough estimate of the latter had been mentioned, it would have

25. Of Whitehaven, England.

26. Robert Sanderson, Rumney's partner.

been more pleasing, as I could then have prepared accordingly.

I am at a loss to determine in what manner these dressed Flags can be brought without incurring much expence, or being liable to great damage: to put them in Cases, will involve

Library of Congress

the first; and to stow them loose, the other may be sustained; unless great care is used in the stowage, which is rarely to be found among Sailors, or even Masters of Vessels. If the Flags are well dressed, a little matter will chip the edges, and break the corners; which would disfigure the work and be hurtful to the eye. I will give no direction therefore on this head, your own judgment on the spot shall dictate; at the same time I have but little doubt, if they are placed in the hold of the Ship with hay or straw to keep them from tubing, of their coming free from damage.

I will soon follow this letter with a remittance from hence, or draft upon London for a sum to enable you to discharge the undertaker. In the mean while let me pray you to hasten the execution and Shipping of them, as my Gallery is very much in want. With great esteem, etc.²⁷

27. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I stand indebted to you for your favors of the 3d, 7th, and 29th. of last month, and feel myself exceedingly obliged to your Excellency for the communications and enclosures therein.

It gives me pleasure to find that an Ordinance of Congress has passed respecting the Western Territory: A little longer delay of this business, and I believe the Country would have been settled, maugre all that could have been done to prevent it; as it is, I am not clear that the same respect will be paid *now* to this Ordinance, which would have been at an earlier period, before men began to speculate in Lands No. West of the Ohio, and to obtrude themselves thereon.

Library of Congress

From the general tenor of my letters from very respectable characters in France, I think it most likely that the dispute between the Emperor and Holland will be settled without bloodshed, and that the former will hardly be able to effect the exchange of his Northerland Dominions for the Dutchy of Bavaria; among other reasons, because the Duke of Deux Ponts,²⁹ nephew and heir to the Elector is opposed thereto: but notwithstanding that, the state of politic's and temper of some of the formidable Powers of Europe are such as to place war at no remote distance.

I have just parted with Mr. and Mrs. Macaulay Graham, who after a stay of about ten days, left this in order to embark for England, from New York: I am obliged to you for introducing a Lady to me whose reputation among the literati is high, and whose principles are so much and so justly admired by the friends of liberty and of mankind; it gives me pleasure to find that her sentiments respecting the inadequacy of the powers of Congress, as also those of Doctr. Price's, coincide with my own; experience evinces the truth of these observations, and the late movements of the mercantile interest

29. Charles II, Duke of Zweibrücken.

exhibits a recent proof of the conviction it is working in the popular mind: but it is unfortunate for us, that evils which might have been averted, must be first felt; and our national character for wisdom, justice and temperance, suffer in the eyes of the world, before we can guide the political machine as it ought to be.

The plan for improving and extending the navigation of this river, is in a promising way: inclosed I do myself the honor of sending you the printed proceedings of the Board of Directors.

Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments and every good wish for you, and with great esteem etc.³⁰

To RICHARD BOULTON

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1785.

Mr. Boulton: Your letter of the 4th. inst:³¹ never reached me until Monday last. I do not enter into agreements, but with an intention of fulfilling them; and I expect the same punctuality on the part of those with whom they are made: and you must therefore perform your's with me, or abide the consequences.

The reason which you assign for not coming is futile and can have no weight with your creditors; your property and your labour are all means with which you can satisfy them; a mortgage or bill of sale of the first; and an order on me by way of security of the latter as your wages shall arise, is all they can desire (if

30. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

As printed in the *Memoir of Richard Henry Lee*, this letter contained the following P. S., not recorded in the "Letter Book": "Col. Wm. Brent died two or three days ago. Your son Ludwell was well at our court yesterday."

31. In the *Washington Papers*.

your Tools are unsaleable) and these are in your power to give them.

You know the purposes for which I engaged you, and that they are important and urgent: that I waited a considerable time after Colo. Fitzhugh had recommended you to me, without applying elsewhere, for your answer; that near a month more has elapsed since our agreement took place; that the season is now far advanced, and workmen consequently so much engaged as not to be procured; In the meanwhile, the roof of my house yields to every rain, and the furniture in no part of it is secure from the injuries which result therefrom. These reasons will fully justify my holding you to the engagement we

Library of Congress

have entered into, and I expect you will enter upon the performance of it without delay. I am, etc.³²

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1785.

Dr. Sir: The letter which your Excellency did me the honor to write to me on the 10th. inst: came duly to hand, and calls for my particular acknowledgments; and my grateful thanks for your obliging offers.

Altho' I conceive that the sunken Lands lying on Albermarle sound, and the waters emptying into it, will in time become the most valuable property in this Country; yet when I reflect further, that it will require a considerable advance to reclaim and render them fit for cultivation, and in the meantime that they may be subjected to expences; I believe it would be most advisable for me, in my situation not to add to my present expenditures; but I am so much obliged by your friendly offer to serve me in this matter, as if they had actually been

32. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

rendered. If your Excellency could make it convenient to give me the substance of the report of the Commrs., respecting the place and manner which are thought best for a cut between the waters of Elizabeth river and those of North Carolina, I should think myself obliged: the improving and extending the inland navigation of the waters of this Country, are in my judgment very interesting to the well being and glory of it, and I am always pleased with any accounts which seem to facilitate those important objects. With great esteem etc.³²

To THOMAS MONTGOMERIE³³

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, June 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: In the evening of yesterday, I was favored with your letter of the 21st.; and thank you for your early and friendly attention to the enquiry I made of you.

I do not now recollect whether I was so explicit as perhaps I ought to have been in communicating all the purposes for which I wanted an assistant: they are these. A Gentleman who can compose a good letter from the heads which shall be given to him; do all other writing which shall be entrusted to his care; keep accounts; examine, arrange and properly methodize my papers (which from hasty removals into the interior country, are in great disorder); ride, at my expence, to do such business as I may have in different parts of this, or the other States, if I should find it more

32. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

33. Of Dumfries, Va.

convenient to send than attend myself to the execution thereof; and occasionally to devote a small portion of time to initiate two little children (a Girl of six, and a boy of four years of age, descendants of the decd. Mr. Custis who live with me and are very promising, and whom I would not wish to confine) in the first rudiments of Education.

A fit person who inclines to accept these employments, will live as I do, be company for those who visit at the House, have his washing and mending found him, and such wages as we can agree upon; which I must be candid in declaring can not be high, as my finances and expenditures will not admit of it.

If you think Mr. Shaw³⁴ competent to these ends and find him disposed to be employed for them I wish to know it by the return of the Post, as there are others offering. If he would write to me, or to you upon the subject, the letter in the latter case to be enclosed to me, I could form some judgment of his hand writing and diction: he will please to signify the

Library of Congress

lowest wages which he will take per ann: or quarterly. If he chooses a personal interview, which perhaps may be more agreeable, I should be glad to see him here, with some samples of his writing. With great esteem, etc.³⁵

To REVEREND STEPHEN BLOOMER BALCH

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1785.

Sir: My nephews are desirous of going to the Dancing School in Georgetown kept by Mr. Tarterson (I think his name is), and as it is my wish that they should be introduced into life with those qualifications which are deemed

34. William Shaw. He acted as a secretary from July, 1785, to May, 1786.

35. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

necessary, I consent to it. Sometime ago I expressed my approbation of their learning French, and a wish that when you had got your House in order to receive them, they might again board with you: Altho' I have no occasion [*sic*] the care, attention and kindness of Mr. Bailey³⁶ to them, I conceive they can board at no place so eligably as at their Preceptors; for it is my wish that their morals as well as education may be attended to; and tho' I do not desire they should be deprived of necessary and proper amusements, yet it is my earnest request that they may be kept close to their studies. I am, etc.³⁵

To THOMAS MONTGOMERIE

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I received your favor of the 28th. last night. I was under promise when I wrote to you on the 25th. of giving an answer to an application which had been made to me, in a few days before, which are now nearly expired: that I may be decisive on it, I should be glad to know precisely what Mr. Shaw would expect for his services if he comes to me;

Library of Congress

for altho' I cannot as I observed in my last, afford to give high pay on the one hand, so neither would I, by any means, leave it indefinite on the other: whatever stipulations I enter into, shall be strictly complied with; which will leave no cause for discontent. I am the more explicit in these declarations because I am apprehensive

36. William Bailey, of Georgetown.

35. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

that higher pay is expected from me than I can afford to give. Mr. Shaw undoubtedly has set a value upon his (those wch. are to be rendered) services, he knows what he has received for former services; It is not reasonable to expect that any Gentleman will lessen his prospects by coming to me, nor do I desire it. I do not expect him for less than he can obtain elsewhere; but if my means will not enable me to give as much, I must do without, or get one less capable of assisting me.

Another thing in Mr. Shaw's proposals is not very agreeable to me: if a Gentn. does not engage with me for *some fixed time*, I may in a month, nay less, be put to a greater non-plus than ever, which would be inconvenient, and perhaps injurious to me, short engagements and early notice of discontinuance might answer the purpose of Mr. Shaw, and remove my difficulties.

That matters may be reduced to a certainty, and I enabled to give the answer above alluded to, in time, I send this by a special messenger. I am obliged to attend the Board of Directors in Alexandria tomorrow; but whether I shall be detained there longer is at present uncertain; I should be glad therefore if it is convenient, to see Mr. Shaw here this evening, or on Saturday, or at Alexandria tomorrow, when upon a little conversation we can readily determine whether our purposes can be reciprocally answered.

He will not, indeed cannot, be considered in the light of a preceptor, because this as I observed in my last, is only occasional and secondary. I am, etc.³⁷

37. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: When I wrote you in Feby. last, I intended to have followed it with a letter of earlier date than the present; but one cause succeeding another, has prevented it 'till now.

I proceeded to a diligent search for the paper requested in your favor of the 23d. of August last year, and after examining every bundle, and indeed despairing of success, it occurred to me that your accot. with Lord Fairfax might afford some clue by which a discovery of it might be made; and in looking in your ledger for an index I found the receipts pasted on the cover of the Book. Having a call to Richmond the latter end of April, I took the receipts with me intending to leave them in the hands of the Attorney General; but it being his opinion there would be no occasion for them, I brought them back, and restored them to the place from whence I took them: the enclosed are copies of those receipts, which I meant should supply the place of the originals, had they passed from me to the Attorney.

I have not yet received the Pictures which you were so obliging as to send me by Mr. Bracken; but have some prospect now of getting them, as Colo. Bassett who left this lately and who expects to be up again in Octor. to the marriage of his Daughter who lives with us, with a son of my brother Charles (who acted as an Aid de Camp to the Marqs. de la Fayette from the year 1780, to the close of the War) has promised to bring them. Altho' I have been so long deprived of the copy, I have lately had the pleasure of seeing the original in the hands of the designer and executioner Mr. Pine,

who spent three weeks with me in May last.

Mr. Pine has met a favorable reception in this Country; and may, I conceive, command as much business as he pleases: he is now preparing materials for historical representations

Library of Congress

of some of the most important events of the War; and if his choice and the execution is equal to the field he has to display his talents in, the pieces (which will be large) will do him much credit as an artist, and be interesting for America and its friends as a deposit for their posterity.

The information which you have given of the disposition of a certain Court coincides precisely with the sentiments I had formed of it from my own observations upon many late occurrences, and from a combination of circumstances. With respect to ourselves, I wish I could add, that as much wisdom had pervaded our councils; as reason and common policy most evidently dictated; but the truth is, the people must *feel* before they will see ; consequently, are brought slowly into measures of public utility. Past experience, or the admonitions of a few, have but little weight, where ignorance, selfishness and design possess the major part: but evils of this nature work their own cure; tho' the remedy comes slower than those who foresee, or think they foresee the danger, attempt to effect. With respect to the commercial system which G: B: is pursuing with this country, the Ministers, in this as in other matters, are defeating their own ends, by facilitating those powers in congress which will produce a counteraction of their plans, and which half a century without, would not have invested that body with. The restriction of our trade, and the additional duties which are imposed upon many of our staple commodities, have put the commercial people of this Country in motion; they now see the indispensable necessity of a general *controuling* power, and are addressing their respective Assemblies to grant this to Congress. Before this every State thought itself competent

to regulate its own Trade, and were verifying the observations of Lord Sheffield; who supposed we never could agree upon any general plan: but those who will go a little deeper into matters, than his Lordship seems to have done, will readily perceive that in any measure where the Fœderal interest is touched, however wide apart the politics of individual States may be, yet as soon as it is discovered they will always unite to effect a common good.

Library of Congress

The Subscriptions for improving and extending the inland navigation of Potomac, have filled very fast: A Company is incorporated, a President and Directors are chosen, a Dividend of the money will soon be paid in, and the work will begin about the first of August. We still want a skilful Engineer, a man of practical knowledge to conduct the business; but where to find him we know not at present: In the meanwhile the less difficult parts of the river will be attempted, that no time may be lost in effecting so important and salutary an undertaking.

Our course of Husbandry in this Country, and more especially in this State, is not only exceedingly unprofitable, but so destructive to our Lands, that it is my earnest wish to adopt a better; and as I believe no Country has carried the improvement of Land and the benefits of Agriculture to greater perfection than England, I have asked myself frequently of late, whether a thorough bred *practical* english Farmer, from a part of England where Husbandry seems to be best understood and is most advantageously practised, could not be obtain'd? and upon what terms? The thought having again occurred to me, whilst I was in

the act of writing this letter, I resolved as a more certain and eligible mode of having the questions determined, to propound them to you. That a man of character and knowledge may be had for *very high wages* there can be no doubt, money we know will fetch anything, and command the services of any man; but with the former I do not abound. To engage a man upon shares as the Overseers of this Country are, might be productive of much discontent to the employed; for we could scarcely convey to a good English Farmer a just idea of the wretched condition of our Lands, what dressings they will require, and how entirely our system must be changed to make them productive: and if we do not, disappointment and continual murmurings would be the consequence. It follows then that the only means by which we can think of obtaining one, must be to give standing wages: for what then my good Sir, do you think a sober, industrious and knowing Farmer might be had to take one of our plantations, say, of ten labourers? Or to bring the matter nearer

Library of Congress

to his own conception of things, a Farm of about 200 or 250 acres of cleared Land, to be stocked with a competent number of Plows, Black Cattle, Sheep and hogs?

When I speak of a knowing farmer, I mean one who understands the best course of crops; how to plough, to sow, to mow, to hedge, to Ditch and above all, Midas like, one who can convert every thing he touches into manure, as the first transmutation towards Gold: in a word one who can bring worn out and gullied Lands into good tilth in the shortest time. I do not mean to put you to the trouble of actually engaging one, but I should be obliged to you for setting on foot the enquiry, and for communicating the result of it to me; because I could not receive your answer in time for the next year; the autumn being, as you

well know, the season at which our Overseers are engaged, and our plans for the ensuing Crop must be formed.

These enquiries, as you will readily perceive, are pointed to a Farmer of the middling class; which more than probably, would best answer my purpose: but, if it could be made convenient to you to extend enquiries further; permit me to ask if one of a higher order could be had? And upon what terms? I mean for a Steward.

It may not in this place be amiss to observe to you that I still decline the growth of Tobacco; and to add, that it is my intention to raise as little Indian Corn as may be: in a word, that I am desirous of entering upon a compleat course of husbandry as practiced in the best Farming Counties of England. I enquire for a man of this latter description with little hope of success. 1st. because I believe one who is compleatly fit for my purposes, wou'd be above my price; and 2dly because I have taken up an idea that an English steward is not so much a farmer, as he is an Attorney or an accomptant; because few of the Nobility and Gentry having their Estates in their own hands, stand more in need of a Collector who, at the same time that he receives the rents, will see that the Covenants of the Leases are complied with, repairs made &c., &c., than of a Farmer. In this however I may be mistaken. One thing more and then I will close this long letter: if from your own

Library of Congress

observation, or from good information you should fix your eyes upon men of one or both of these descriptions, and could ascertain his or their terms (leaving me at liberty to accede to them or not, within a reasonable time for an intercourse by letter), I had rather he

or they should be personally known to you; or their characters well ascertained by a friend in whom you can confide; because what you or such a person would say of them, I could rely upon: but how often do we find recommendations given without merit to deserve them, founded in a disposition to favor the applicant, or want of resolution to refuse them, oftentimes indeed, to get rid of a dependent who is troublesome or injurious to us, upon what are *called* decent terms. A man in the character of a Steward (if single, and his appearance equal to it) would live in the House with me and be at my table, in the manner Lund Washington was accustomed to do, who is now married⁴¹ and a House Keeper tho' still attending my business. The common Farmer would live on the Farm which would be entrusted to his care.

I have lately had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 19th. of March, and to learn by it that Mrs. Fairfax and you have enjoyed better health than usual, last winter: a continuance of it Mrs. Washington and I most sincerely wish you.

I have not yet seen Mr. Thos. Corbin, he sent your letter under cover a few days ago with assurances of making me a visit as soon as he had recovered from a slight indisposition. He appears from your account to have been very ill treated by his brother Dick; but the latter I understand has not been behind him in charges to some of his friends in this country, who think Thos. in the wrong.

Mrs. Washington joins me in most affectionate regards, and in every good wish for you and Mrs. Fairfax, with much truth I am, &c.

Library of Congress

P.S. I thank Mr. Heartley⁴² for the compliments he sent me thro' you, and for his other polite attentions to me; and pray you to make mine acceptable to him whenever a proper occasion

41. He had married Elizabeth Foote in 1782.

42. David Hartley.

offers. I did not know of your Nephew's intended trip to England or I would most assuredly have written to you by so good an opportunity.⁴³

To THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

My Lady: In the last letter which I had the honor to write to you, I informed your Ladyship of the communication I had made to the President of Congress of your wishes to obtain Lands in the Western Territory for a number of Emigrants as a means of civilizing the Savages, and propagating the Gospel among them. In answer, he informed me that Mr. Henry, Governor of this State, had laid your Ladyships letter and plan which were addressed to him, before Congress, in a full and ample manner; but his *private* opinion of the matter was, that under the pressure of Debt to which this fund was to be appropriated, and the diversity of sentiment respecting the mode of applying it, that no discrimination would, or indeed could be made in favor of Emigrants of any description whatsoever. I waited however a considerable time to know the result of Mr. Henry's reference, before I would give your Ladyship the trouble of another letter on this subject; but hearing nothing more of the matter, and having had the enclosed resolutions and ordinance sent to me by the President himself, as the result of their long and painful deliberation on the mode of disposing of the Western Lands, I will delay no longer to express my concern that your

Library of Congress

Ladyships humane and benevolent views are not better seconded. The resolutions and ordinance herewith enclosed (on which

43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I shall make no comments) will give the terms and shew your Ladyship the mode by which the Lands belonging to the Union are to be obtained; in other words, how difficult it must be for foreigners to know when or where to apply for them. With the highest respect and consideration, etc.³⁸

To WILLIAM WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: My nephew³⁹ delivered me your letter of the 21st. of April. For the kind attention shewn him by Mrs. Washington and yourself he entertains a grateful sense, and I offer you my sincere thanks, which I should be glad to renew to you both in person at this place. He enjoys a tolerable share of health, but is gone to (what are called in his Country) the Sweet Springs, to obtain a better stock to fit him for the pleasures, and duties too, of a matrimonial voyage on wch. he is to embark at his return.

I would thank you my good Sir, for the Acorns, Nutts, or seeds of trees or plants not common in this Country; but which you think would grow here, especially of the flowering kind: the best method, I believe, to preserve those which are apt to spoil by withering and drying, and from worms, is to put them into dry Sand as soon as they are gathered; this retains the moisture in them, and vegetative properties, without sprouting.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best respects to you and your Lady, and I am etc.³⁸

38. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

39. George Augustine Washington.

To WILLIAM BLAKE

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Sir: By my nephew I had the honor to receive your favor of the 20th. Mar: accompanied with some plants and Seeds of the Palmetto royal, for which I pray you to accept my sincere thanks: the former are not only alive yet, but look vigorous; and the latter (being sowed) are vegetating, and appearing above ground. I shall nurse them with great attention.

It would give me great pleasure to visit my friends in So. Carolina: but when, or whether ever it may be in my power to accomplish it, is not, at this moment, in my power to decide. I have the honor, etc.⁴⁰

To CHARLES VANCOUVER

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Sir: Your favor of the 16th. of last month came safely to hand.

You do me much honor by proposing to inscribe a work (of which you sent me a specimen) to my special patronage and protection: but tho' willing to give every support to the encouragement of literature and useful knowledge, which may be within my sphere of action; yet, on the present occasion I must beg leave to decline the honor of having your labors dedicated to me. With chearfulness I will follow the subscriptions (wch. I presume must 'ere this, be pretty well advanced) of Gentn. of my acquaintance; and with a proper sense of the distinction meant for me, I am, etc.⁴³

40. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JAMES RUMSEY

Mount Vernon, July 2, 1785.

Sir: Early in last month I wrote you an answer to your letter of March 10th., and sent it under cover to my brother in Berkeley, who happened at that time to be from home: the presumption is however, that you have received it 'ere this, and I shall not trouble you with a repetition of the sentiments therein contained.

In that letter I enclosed you a hand Bill of the proceedings of the Board of Directors,⁴⁴ containing an advertisement of their want of a Manager, two Assistants, some Overseers, and a number of Labourers; requesting that it might be exposed at some public place in the county where you live: those of the two first descriptions were required to meet the Directors at Alexandria on yesterday; but whether the notice was too short, or that characters who are competent to the business are difficult to be met with, I shall not take upon me to determine; but none appearing with such testimonials of their abilities, industry and integrity, as the Board conceived indispensably necessary for their justification, no agreement was made, but the 14th. inst. appointed for them and others, to produce such, of their qualification for this business.

As I have imbibed a very favorable opinion of your mechanical abilities, and have had no reason to distrust your fitness in other respects; I took the liberty of mentioning your name to the Directors, and I dare say if you are disposed to offer your services, they would be attended to under favourable circumstances: but as this is a business of great magnitude, and good or ill impressions in the commencement of it will have a powerful effect on the minds of the Adventurers, and on the public opinion; and as the Directors are no more than Trustees of the Company, and of consequence must proceed

44. Of the Potomac Company.

Library of Congress

circumspectly; Candour obliges me to observe to you, as I believe some of those who will meet for the purpose of appointing a Manager and Assistants have only a superficial acquaintance with you, that it might be well, if you incline to offer your services, to bring some letters or other credential of your industry &c., and if these were to come from members of the Company they would have the greater weight.

Colo. Gilpin⁴⁵ (one of the Directors, and who is the bearer of this letter) is on his way to the Falls of Seneca and Shenandoah; and it would be fortunate if he shou'd meet with you in this trip. I am, etc.⁴⁶

To WILLIAM SHAW

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 4th. I receiv'd on the 6th. Altho' the sum stipulated is above the mark I had prescribed myself yet, in consideration of the good character given of you by Mr. Montgomerie, the idea I entertain of your knowledge of Accots., and the hope that you may answer my purposes in other respects; I accede fully to the terms of your letter, with this condition only, that in payment of this sum, Dollars shall be estimated at four and six pence Sterling, and other Gold and Silver coin (curr't. in this country) in that proportion. This is the legal difference of exchange of it, and will render it unnecessary for either of us to enquire into the

45. George Gilpin.

46. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

rise or fall, to ascertain the value of any payment.

I do not request you to come hither before the time mentioned in your letter; but should be glad if you would not exceed it.

Library of Congress

With esteem and regard, I am, etc.⁴⁹

To THOMAS CORBIN

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1785.

Sir: Yesterday afternoon I had the honor to receive your favor of the 24th. of June; covering a letter from Colo. Fairfax of Bath, dated in Mar: last. The latter speaks of the injurious treatment you have met with, and of the aspersion of your character in England, for which I am exceedingly sorry; but as he draws no conclusion, and your letter is silent, I am a little at a loss to discover the tendency of the information of them to me; and therefore shall only add that whenever it is convenient and agreeable to you to come into this part of the Country, I shall be glad to see you at this place, and that, I am, etc.⁴⁹

To ALEXANDER WHITE⁵⁵

Mount Vernon, July 14, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Fraunces's⁵⁶ letters to you and to me, the last of which I also enclose for your perusal, are so expressive of his want as to render it unnecessary for me to add ought, on the occasion of them.

He has been considered (tho' confined within the british lines) as a friend to our cause:

49. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

55. Member of the Virginia House of Delegates from 1782 to 1786 and from 1799 to 1801; Member of Congress from 1789 to 1793; one of the Board of Commissioners for the District of Columbia from 1795 to the abolition of the Board in 1802.

56. Samuel Fraunces.

Library of Congress

It is said he was remarkably attentative to our prisoners in the City of New York; supporting them, as far as his means would allow, in the hour of their greatest distress: this it is which lead both Governor Clinton and myself to countenance and support him; and is the cause I presume of his applying, thro' me, to you, and must be my apology for giving you the trouble of this letter.

With respect to his demand against the Estate of Genl. Lee, I know nothing; his letter, to the best of my recollection, is the first intimation I ever had of his being a Creditor; the propriety and justice therefore of the claim must speak for themselves, and will no doubt have their due weight: the *time* of payment seems interesting to him.

The subject of this letter reminds me of an accot. of my own against Genl. Lee's Estate, which I put into your hands at the Springs last year.⁵⁷ With great esteem I am, etc.⁵⁸

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH⁵⁹

Mount Vernon, July 14, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 4th. came to me on the 12th: at the time of writing it you could not have received my letter dated in the latter part of June, covering one for Richard Boulton; not knowing how, otherwise, to get one to him, I took the liberty of addressing it to your care.

In that letter I informed him, that if he did not immediately enter upon the execution of his Contract, I would put the penalty thereof in force: but from the abandoned course in which he

57. In Washington's "Ledger B" is the following account against Gen. Charles Lee; "1775, Jan. 4. To Cash lent him at Mt Vernon £15. June. To Ditto lent him on the Road from Phila. to Cambridge, at different times, viz. 6 Guineas & 4 dollars 9:12—. 1786, Decr. 28. By Cash recd of Alexr White Esqr. Exr. to Genl Lee by the hands of Mr. Lear 24:12:—"

Library of Congress

58. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

59. Of Patuxent, Md.

seems to have engaged, from your last letter; and his unwillingness to forsake his associates in drunkenness, I do not choose (altho' the disappointment occasions me the loss of a summer) to be concerned with him, lest his bad example should have an unfavorable influence upon my workmen, of which I have several. I beg therefore, if my letter to him has not been forwarded, that you would be so obliging as to destroy it.

As I am not in immediate want of the Articles which you were so good as to offer me, I had rather take the chance of a water conveyance round, than to send my waggon to Colo. Platers: but as this may not happen soon, and it is unreasonable to keep you out of the cost of them; if you will ascertain the quantity and price of such as you can best spare, I will pay the amount to your order at any time. The brass-spring Locks and hinges, and any other hinges, the mortice locks and furniture, the Glue, and Painters brushes, or such part of each as you can most conveniently dispense with, may be added to my former list.

The Guinea-grass seeds which I sowed proved as defective as yours; but my nephew who arrived after I had the pleasure of your company at this place, brought me a small quantity from Bermuda, some of which I sowed and part has vegetated: if it prospers and is worth cultivating, I will supply you with a little of it to put you in stock, he speaks of it in very favourable terms, but is doubtful of the Climate.

Mrs. Washington joins in compliments. and best wishes for Mrs. Fitzhugh and yourself with Dr. Sir, &c.

P: S: I address this letter to you at Annapolis in consequence of the information of your intention to be there about the middle of this month.⁶⁰

60. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, July 14, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 9th. of Feby. was long on its passage to me; but my answer would not have been delayed 'till now, had not much time been spent in obtaining the several enclosures herewith sent you: a very necessary voucher however, viz: the British King's proclamation, properly authenticated, forbidding the settlement of the Western Lands, in defiance of which the Defendants took possession of the Land which was surveyed for military service, is not yet come to hand, but shall be sent as soon as it does.

The signature to Posey's Bond has the best proof of the handwriting I can obtain without incurring much trouble and expence: there are numbers in this part of the Country, where he formerly lived, who are well acquainted with his hand writing; but these are far removed from the Executive of the State, or any of the judges of the Supreme Court of this Commonwealth. To me, I confess the proof seems unnecessary; for in my judgment there can be no higher evidence of the authenticity of the Bond, than the recognition of it in the Grant which, if I mistake not, expressly declares that it is granted to me as Assignee of John Posey; consequently this Government must have been satisfied of the legality of the assignment, and such as would warrant the Patent granted me thereon.

I transmit you the act of our Assembly passed in the session of 1779, properly authenticated, in which is included all the Law relative to the present

subject: in this you will find upon what footing settlement and pre-emption rights are placed; and what are the requisites necessary for rendering them valid. It is very certain the Defendants have not taken those necessary steps pointed out by the Law, in order to give them a title by settlement or pre-emption: they knew that the Land had been surveyed for me; that it was always called mine; that one Cabin if no more was built upon it when they came there, and they were repeatedly forwarned from settling themselves there

Library of Congress

during the life of Mr. Crawford. Being thus apprized that their claim was contested, they should have submitted it to the decision of the Commissioners sent out to that Country for the special purpose of adjusting all such disputed titles; and altho' the jurisdiction of these Commrs. only extended to unpatented Lands, yet such a submission was necessary on the part of the Defendants, that they might obtain Certificates and act agreeably to the direction of the Law: as they failed to do this, I conceive they have precluded themselves from setting up a title by occupancy at this day: I say they failed to make this submission; because as I was never summoned to litigate their claim, any proceeding therein without such a progress would have been illegal.

I expect that one objection to my title will be, that this Land was not surveyed by a County Surveyor, but only by one invested with a special commission for surveying the 200,000 acres which were given as a bounty to the 1st. Va. regiment. But you will find that my case comes fully within the first clause of the Law; and as this Survey was covered with a military warrant, such as is mentioned in the Act, no person could more legally have made it than Mr. Crawford. I will observe here, that at the time this survey was *returned* to the Office, Mr. Crawford was Deputy surveyor to Mr. Lewis. You will observe by a subsequent clause in the Law, that all locations made by Officers and Soldiers upon the Lands of actual settlers, shall be void; but this cannot operate against me for

several reasons: in the first place it is confined merely to Locations, and cannot extend to Patents; secondly, admitting that my survey was made lawfully, then it is evident that instead of being intruded upon, the Defendants themselves were the intruders: and thirdly, setting my survey and Patent out of the question, I was the prior occupant and entitled to at least 1400 acres, admitting only one Cabin to have been built; altho' I believe, and Capt. Crawford in letters which I left with you expressly declares it, there were more; so that whichever way you view their title, it appears to be defective. From what cause I know not, but I believe Capt. Posey's warrant is dated subsequent to the return of the Survey made by Mr. Crawford, and if I remember right the recital in the Patent which you have

Library of Congress

makes this appear; I apprize you of this lest any handle should be made of it by your Opponents.

The only difficulty which can arise in the prosecution of the ejectments in my conception (if my *legal* title shou'd be thought insufficient, which I scarcely think possible) is to prove the *extent* of my improvement before the Defendants took possession of the Land, and the warnings wch. they received afterwards to quit it.

Colo. Crawford who transacted my business in your County, or his Brother Val⁵² could have placed these matters in a clear point of view, as I dare say many others are able to do, if I knew who to fix upon and how to come at them; but never having an idea that it was necessary, and the removal of persons &c., may give some trouble.

To ease you as much as I am able of this, I have in a paper enclosed,

52. Valentine Crawford.

put down the ground and supports of my title under all circumstances as they have occurred to me; and the plea which I suppose will be urged in behalf of my Opponents in opposition thereto.

I feel myself under great obligation to Mr. Wilson⁵³ for signifying a readiness to serve me in this suit, because I am satisfied motives of friendship more than of interest were at the bottom. His attendance in Congress must now render this impracticable if it were ever so necessary; but to me the case seems so clear and self evident, that I think nothing more is necessary but to state facts: however, as you understand the decision of your Courts better than I do, I leave it wholly to yourself to call in assistance or not, and from whom you please. I should be glad to know when you think the cause will come to issue: if I could be morally certain of the time and nothing of greater importance should happen to prevent it, I would be in the Western Country at that time. I am, etc.

Library of Congress

P. S: Since writing the above I have received an attested Copy of the Proclamation alluded to in the body of this letter, which with the letter enclosing it, from our Attoy. General, I send. On a cursory reading of it, (for I was obliged to enclose it almost in the same instant I received it) it may be doubted, I think, whether military Locations beyond the sources of the rivers running into the Atlantic, do not come under the general restrictions: to remove this objection, if it should be made, I will endeavor to obtain an attested copy of an order of the Governor and Council of this Dominion, recognizing the right of the Troops of this State, to Lands under the aforesaid Proclamation; and directing surveys thereof to be made on the Western Waters; tho' I fear it will be difficult to come at, as I have understood

53. James Wilson.

that the records of the privy Council had fallen into the hands of the Enemy, or were otherwise lost.⁵⁴

To ISRAEL SHREVE

Mount Vernon, July 15, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 22d. of June came safely to hand. I have no Lands in the Western Country which I incline, at this time, to make actual sale of. Between the two Kanhawa's on the banks of the Ohio, I hold (bounded by the river, and of rich bottom with good Mill Seats) about 10,000 acres of as valuable land as any in that region: and on the Gt. Kanhawa, from near the mouth upwards, I have about 30,000 acres more of equal quality with the first mentioned; all of which I have offered on Leases, for 21,999, or 10 years, renewable forever, on encreasing rents; on certain conditions which were published in Claypoole's paper in March or April of last year, and may easily be resorted to.

As I have not disposed of these lands yet, I presume the terms are thought too high; but as I know the situation and convenience of them, and that the quality of the soil is inferior to none in all the Western Territory, I do not incline to make any change in my terms,

Library of Congress

unless I am, in a manner compelled to it by taxation, which (however inconvenient it may be to myself) I wish to see heavily laid on, that the officers and Soldiers, and other public creditors may receive their just dues. I am, etc.⁶¹

54. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

61. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, July 17, 1785.

Dr. Sir: By Mr. Gouverr. Morris I sent you the amount of the cost of plank, which you were so obliging as to send me from Baltimore.

The packet⁶² enclosed with this, for Mr. Hilligas⁶³ contains necessary and valuable papers for Mr. Thos. Smith, in a suit I have been obliged to commence in Washington County, State of Pennsylv., against sundry persons who taking advantage of my absence and peculiar situation during the War, possessed themselves of a tract of Land I hold in the vicinity of Fort Pitt; for which I have a Patent, obtained in legal form, ever since the year 1774, and for which I am now compelled to bring ejectmts.

Mr. Smith requested these papers to be sent to him under cover to Mr. Hilligas as a certain mode of conveyance; but as much time has elapsed in obtaining them; as some of the papers point to evidence which may not readily be come at; as the Suit may come forward at the Septr. term, and as the channel of conveyance pointed out by him is very circuitous; I should be much obliged, if good opportunities frequently offer from Baltimore to Carlisle, by your stripping off the address to Mr. Hilligas, and forwarding the enclosure as directed to Mr. Smith. With much truth and sincerity, I am, etc.⁶⁴

Library of Congress

62. On July 17 Washington wrote briefly to Michael Hillegas, a copy of which letter is in the "Letter Book," asking him to forward this packet of papers to Thomas Smith.

63. Michael Hillegas.

64. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, July 19, 1785.

Sir: The honor which the Society for promoting agriculture, lately established in the City of Philada., has done me by electing me an honorary member, is highly pleasing and flattering to me; the strongest assurances of which I pray you, at the next meeting, to communicate with my respectful compliments to the Society. Accept at the same time Sir, my acknowledgment of the flattering expression, with which you have accompanied the certificate of my election.

No measure, in my opinion, will be more conducive to the public weal than the establishment of this Society, if the purposes of it are prosecuted with spirit. Much is it to be wished that each State would institute similar ones; and that these Societies when formed would correspond regularly and freely with each other. We are

not only in our infancy of agriculture improvement, but in this State the farmers are pursuing an unprofitable course of Crops, to the utter destruction of their Lands.

I am obliged to the Society for its address to the public, and for the summary of a course of crops by Mr. Bordely:65 the latter I had before received from the Author, who was so obliging as to send me several copies immediately after the publication thereof. I have the honor, etc.66

To GEORGE WEEDON

Mount Vernon, July 23, 1785.

Dr. Sir: It is some time since I received the enclosed Bill, under cover from the Drawer: among a multiplicity of other letters it got buried and forgot; until a line from Mr. de Marbois the other day, forwarding the third bill of same tenor and date, reminded me of it.

As I do not know who the Treasurer of the Society of the Cincinnati of this State is, I take the liberty of committing the Bill to your care, with a request that you would be so obliging as to ask him personally if he is near you, or by letter if he is at a distance, for a receipt for it, that I may transmit the same to Colo. De Corney, with an apology for my long silence. If I knew who the state Treasurer is, I would not give you any trouble in this business; but as I really do not, I hope it will be received as an excuse for having done it. I am, etc.⁶⁷

65. Beale(?) Boardly, of Wye, Md.

66. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785.

My dr. Humphreys: Since my last to you, I have received your letter of the 15th. of January, and I believe that of the 11th. of November, and thank you for them.⁶⁸ It always gives me pleasure to hear from you; and I should think if *amusements* would spare you, business could not so much absorb your time as to prevent your writing more frequently, especially as there is a regular conveyance once a month by the Packet.

Library of Congress

As the complexion of European politics seems now (from letters I have received from the Marqs. de la Fayette, Chevrs. Chartellux, De la Luzerne, &c.,) to have a tendency to Peace, I will say nothing of war, nor make any animadversions upon the contending powers; otherwise, I might possibly have said that the retreat from it seemed impossible after the explicit declaration of the parties: My first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from off the Earth, and the sons and Daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements, than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind: rather than quarrel about territory let the poor, the needy and oppressed of the Earth, and those who want Land, resort to the fertile plains of our western country, the *second* 69 *Promise* , and there dwell in peace, fulfilling the first and great commandment.

In a former letter, I informed you my Dr. Humphreys, that if I had *talents* for it, I have not *leisure* to turn my thoughts to commentaries: a

68. Humphreys was then in Paris.

69. The words “ *land of*” inadvertently omitted by the “Letter Book” recorder.

consciousness of a defective education, and a certainty of the want of time, unfit me for such an undertaking; what with company, letters and other matters, many of them quite extraneous, I have not been able to arrange my own private concerns so as to rescue them from that disorder'd state into which they have been thrown by the war, and to do which is become absolutely necessary for my support, whilst I remain on this stage of human action. The sentiments of your last letter on this subject gave me great pleasure; I should be pleased indeed to see you undertake this business: your abilities as a writer; your discernment respecting the principles which lead to the decision by arms; your personal knowledge of many facts as they occurred in the progress of the War; your disposition to justice, candour and impartiality, and your diligence in investigating truth, combining fit you, when joined with the vigor of life, for this task; and I should with

Library of Congress

great pleasure, not only give you the perusal of all my papers, but any oral information of circumstances, which cannot be obtained from the former, that my memory will furnish: and I can with great truth add that my house would not only be at your service during the period of your preparing this work, but (and without an unmeaning compliment I say it) I should be exceedingly happy if you would make it your home. You might have an apartment to yourself, in which you could command your own time; you would be considered and treated as one of the family; and meet with that cordial reception and entertainment which are characteristic of the sincerest friendship.

To reverberate European news would be idle, and we have little of domestic kind worthy of attention: We have held treaties indeed, with the Indians; but they were so unseasonably delayed, that these people by our last accounts from the westward, are in a discon-

tented mood, supposed by many to be instigated thereto by our late enemies, now, to be sure, *fast friends*; who from any thing I can learn, under the indefinite expression of the treaty hold, and seem resolved to retain possession of our western Posts. Congress have also, after a long and tedious deliberation, passed an ordinance for laying off the Western Territory into States, and for disposing of the land; but in a manner and on terms which few people (in the Southern States) conceive can be accomplished: Both sides are sure, and the event is appealed to, let time decide it. It is however to be regretted that local politics and self-interested views obtrude themselves into every measure of public utility: but to such characters be the consequences.

My attention is more immediately engaged in a project which I think big with great political, as well as commercial consequences to these States, especially the middle ones: it is, by removing the obstructions, and extending the inland navigation of our rivers, to bring the States on the Atlantic in close connexion with those forming to the westward, by a short and easy transportation: without this, I can easily conceive they will have different views, separate interests and other connexions. I may be singular in my ideas; but they are these, that to open a door to, and make easy the way for those Settlers to the westward (which

Library of Congress

ought to progress regularly and compactly) before we make any stir about the navigation of the Mississippi, and before our settlements are far advanced towards that river, would be our true line of policy. It can, I think, be demonstrated, that

the produce of the western Territory (if the navigations which are now in hand succeed, and of which I have no doubt) as low down the Ohio as the Great Kanhawa, I *believe* to the Falls, and between the parts above and the Lakes, may be brought either to the highest shipping port on this or James river, at a less expence, with more ease, (including the return) and in a much shorter time, than it can be carried to New Orleans if the Spaniards instead of restricting, were to throw open their ports and invite our trade. But if the commerce of that country should embrace this channel, and connexions be formed; experience has taught us (and there is a very recent proof with G: Britain) how next to impracticable it is to divert it; and if that should be the case, the Atlantic States (especially as those to the westward will in a great degree fill with foreigners) will be no more to the present union, except to excite perhaps very justly our fears, than the Country of California which is still more to the westward, and belonging to another power.

Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to you, and with every wish for your happiness, I am etc.⁷⁰

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785.

My Dear Marquis: I have to acknowledge and thank you for your several favors of the 9th. of February, 19th. of March and 16th. of April, with their enclosures; all of which (the last only yesterday) have been received since I had the honor to address you in February.

70. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

I stand before you as a Culprit: but to *repent* and *be forgiven* are the precepts of Heaven: I do the former, do you practice the latter, and it will be participation of a divine attribute. Yet I am not barren of excuses for this seeming inattention; frequent absences from home, a round of company when at it, and the pressure of many matters, might be urged as apologies for my long silence; but I disclaim all of them, and trust to the forbearance of friendship and your wonted indulgence: indeed so few things occur, in the line on which I now move, worthy of attention, that this also might be added to the catalogue of my excuses; especially when I further add, that one of my letters, if it is to be estimated according to its length, would make three of yours.

I now congratulate you, and my heart does it more effectually than my pen, on your safe arrival at Paris, from your voyage to this Country, and on the happy meeting with Madame la Fayette and your family in good health. May the blessing of this long continue to them, and may every day add increase of happiness to yourself.

As the clouds which overspread your hemisphere are dispersing, and peace with all its concomitants is dawning upon your Land, I will banish the sound of War from my letter: I wish to see the sons and daughters of the world in Peace and busily employed in the more agreeable amusement of fulfilling the first and great commandment, *Increase and Multiply* : as an encouragement to which we have opened the fertile plains of the Ohio to the poor, the needy and the oppressed of the Earth; any one therefore who is heavy laden, or who wants land to cultivate, may repair thither and abound,

as in the Land of promise, with milk and honey: the ways are preparing, and the roads will be made easy, thro' the channels of Potomac and James river.

Speaking of these navigations, I have the pleasure to inform you that the subscriptions, (especially for the first) at the surrender of the books, agreeably to the act which I enclosed you in my last, exceeded my most sanguine expectation: for the latter, that is James river, no comparison of them has yet been made.

Library of Congress

Of the £50,000 Sterlg. required for the Potomac navigation, upwards of £40,000, was subscribed before the middle of May, and encreasing fast. A President and four Directors, consisting of your hble. Servant, Govrs. Johnson and Lee of Maryland, and Colo. Fitzgerald and Gilpin of this State, were chosen to conduct the undertaking. The first dividend of the money was paid in on the 15th. of this month; and the work is to be begun the first of next, in those parts which require least skill; leaving the more difficult 'till an Engineer of abilities and practical knowledge can be obtained; which reminds me of the question which I propounded to you in my last, on this subject, and on which I should be glad to learn your sentiments. This prospect, if it succeeds and of which I have no doubt, will bring the Atlantic States and the Western Territory into close connexion, and be productive of very extensive commercial and political consequences; the last of which gave the spur to my exertions, as I could foresee many, and great mischiefs which would naturally result from a separation, and that a separation would inevitably take place, if the obstructions between the two countries remained, and the navigation of the Mississippi should be made free.

Great Britain, in her commercial policy is acting the same unwise part, with respect to herself, which seems to have influenced all her Councils; and thereby is defeating

her own ends: the restriction of our trade, and her heavy imposts on the staple commodities of this Country, will I conceive, immediately produce powers in Congress to regulate the Trade of the Union; which, more than probably would not have been obtained without in half a century. The mercantile interests of the *whole* Union are endeavouring to effect this, and will no doubt succeed; they see the necessity of a controuling power, and the futility, indeed the absurdity, of each State's enacting Laws for this purpose independent of one another. This will be the case also, after a while, in all matters of common concern. It is to be regretted, I confess, that Democratical States must always *feel* before they can see : it is this that makes their Governments slow, but the people will be right at last.

Library of Congress

Congress after long deliberation, have at length agreed upon a mode for disposing of the Lands of the United States in the Western territory: it may be a good one, but it does not comport with my ideas. The ordinance is long, and I have none of them by me, or I would send one for your perusal. They seem in this instance, as in almost every other, to be surrendering the little power they have, to the States individually which gave it to them. Many think the price which they have fixed upon the Lands too high; and all to the Southward I believe, that disposing of them in Townships, and by square miles alternately, they will be a great let to the sale: but experience, to which there is an appeal, must decide.

Soon after I had written to you in Feby., Mr. Jefferson, and after him

Mr. Carmichael informed me that in consequence of an application from Mr. Harrison⁷¹ for permission to export a Jack for me from Spain, his Catholic Majesty had ordered *two* of the first race in his Kingdom (lest an accident might happen to *one*) to be purchased and presented to me as a mark of his esteem. Such an instance of condescension and attention from a crowned head is very flattering, and lays me under great obligation to the King; but neither of them is yet arrived: these I presume are the two mentioned in your favor of the 16th. of April; one as having been shipped from Cadiz, the other as expected from the Isle of Malta,⁷² which you would forward. As they have been purchased since December last, I began to be apprehensive of accidents; which I wish may not be the case with respect to the one from Cadiz, if he was actually shipped at the time of your account: should the other pass thro' your hands you cannot oblige me more, than by requiring the greatest care, and most particular attention to be paid to him. I have long endeavoured to procure one of a good size and breed, but had little expectation of receiving two as a royal gift.

I am much obliged to you my dear Marquis, for your attention to the hounds, and not less sorry that you should have met the smallest difficulty, or experienced the least trouble in obtaining them: I was no way anxious about these, consequently should have

Library of Congress

felt no regret, or sustained no loss if you had not succeeded in your application. I have commissioned three or four persons (among whom Colo. Marshall⁷³ is one,) to procure for me in Kentucke, for the use of the Kings Garden's at Versailles or elsewhere, the seeds mentioned in the list you sent me from New York, and such others as are curious, and will forward them as soon as they come to my hands; which cannot be 'till after the growing Crop has given its seeds.

71. Richard Harrison. He was a merchant of Cadiz. Spain.

72. The jack from Malta was obtained by Lafayette and was separate and distinct from the Spanish jacks.

73. Thomas(?) Marshall.

My best wishes will accompany you to Potsdam, and into the Austrian Dominions whenever you set out upon that tour. As an unobserved spectator, I should like to take a peep at the troops of those Monarch's at their manœuverings, upon a grand field day; but as it is among the unattainable things, my philosophy shall supply the place of curiosity, and set my mind at ease.

In your favor of the 19th. of March you speak of letters which were sent by a Mr. Williams; but none such have come to hand. The present for the little folks did not arrive by Mr. Ridouts Ship as you expected; to what cause owing I know not. Mrs. Washington has but indifferent health; and the late loss of her mother, and only brother Mr. Barthw. Dandridge (one of the Judges of our Supreme Court) has rather added to her indisposition. My mother and friends enjoy good health. George has returned after his peregrination thro' the West Indies, to Bermuda, the Bahama Islands, and Charlestown; at the last place he spent the winter. He is in better health than when he set out, but not quite recovered: He is now on a journey to the Sweet Springs, to procure a stock sufficient to fit him for a matrimonial voyage in the Frigate F. Bassett, on board which he means to embark at his

Library of Congress

return in October: how far his case is desperate, I leave you to judge, if it is so, the remedy however pleasing at first, will certainly be violent.

The latter end of April I had the pleasure to receive in good order, by a Ship from London, the picture of yourself, Madame la Fayette and the children, which I consider as an invaluable present, and shall give it the best place in

my House. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments, and in every good wish for Madame de la Fayette, yourself and family, all the others who have come under your kind notice present their compliments to you. For myself, I can only repeat the sincere attachment, and unbounded affection of My Dr. Marqs., &c.⁷⁴

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, July 28, 1785.

Sir: A few days ago by a Mr. Hickman,⁷⁷ who either is, or wants to be a tenant of mine in Frederick County. I sent you a dozen blank Leases. The tract on which he says he is fixed, is part of two Lots which I purchased at the sale of Colo. George Mercer's Estate, in the year 1774; a plat of which I send you, that the whole may be arranged into four tenements, as conveniently disposed as water &c. will admit.

In September last, whilst I was at my brothers in Berkeley, many persons applied for this Land; but from causes which then existed I came to no positive agreement with any; referring them to Mr. Snickers,⁷⁸ who was so kind as to promise that he would fix matters for me (as I was in a hurry and could not go upon the Land myself) on the terms which, if I recollect right, I gave him in a letter. Some time after, two men of the names of Winzer⁷⁹ and Beaven, with the letter enclosed from Mr. Snickers, came here, and were told that I would comply with whatever agreement was made with them by him. Among other things they said Mr. Snickers had promised them Leases for fourteen years; this I observed

Library of Congress

74. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

77. Joseph Hickman.

78. Edward Snickers.

79. Joseph Winsor or Windsor.

could not, in my opinion, be the case, because I had expressly named ten years (the term for which Mr. Burwell let his Lands adjoining), but notwithstanding if the case was so, and Mr. Snickers would declare it, the Leases should be filled up accordingly: this I repeat, and as far as the matter respects Winzer, for it seems Beaven has changed his mind, the other conditions endorsed on the back of Mr. Snickers's letter to me, are to be granted him; he paying all the taxes wch. may be laid on the Land he holds.

However, as filling up one Lease may be a guide with respect to the others, I enclose one in the name of Winzer, with the blank, as completely filled as I can do it under my uncertainty with respect to the term of years for which he is to have it, and which is to be determined by Mr. Snickers; and for want of the quantity of acres in, and a description of the Lot which he is to have.

There are already three Tenants on this tract, to whom you may fill up Leases on the same terms which I have done for Winzer; and whenever they will bring evidences to prove them, I will sign them. As Beaven has declined taking the Lot which he agreed for first with Mr. Snickers and afterwards with me, you may let it to any good tenant who offers, upon the terms on which the others are held. The three new engaged will have rents to pay thereon the first of next January. It will be necessary to take an Assignment of Mr. Whitings Lease, before one can be made to Mr. Ainess;⁸⁰ or some instrument of writing by which it will be cancelled, in order to render the new one valid; and I hope payment of the money due on the replevy Bonds of the

Library of Congress

80. Ariss.

former will not be delayed longer than the time mentioned in your last letter, viz, September.

Having got a Gentleman to assist me in my business; I hope shortly to have my Accots. so arranged as to be able to send you a rental of what is due to be in London, Fauquier and Berkeley Counties. I have a Lot in the town and common of Winchester of which, when you have occasion to go thither, I beg you to enquire into the state and condition, and give me information of what can be made of them: the one in the Town, I believe a Doctr. McKay has something to do with.

I would be obliged to you for enquiring of Mr. Wormley's manager, if he has any good red clover seed for sale, what quantity, and the price thereof, and let me know the result by the first conveyance to Alexandria. I am, etc.⁸¹

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, July 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: Altho' it is not my intention to derive any pecuniary advantage from the generous vote of the Assembly of this State, consequent of its gratuitous gift of fifty shares in each of the navigations of the rivers Potomac and James; yet, as I consider these undertakings as of vast political and commercial importance to the States on the Atlantic, especially to those nearest the centre of the Union, and adjoining the Western Territory, I can let no act of mine impede the progress of the work: I have therefore come to the determination to hold the shares which the Treasurer was directed to subscribe

81. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

on my account, in trust for the use and benefit of the public; unless I shall be able to discover, before the meeting of the Assembly, that it would be agreeable to it to have the product of the Sales arising from these shares, applied as a fund on which to establish two Charity schools, one on each river, for the Education and support of the Children of the poor and indigent of this Country who cannot afford to give it; particularly the children of those men of this description, who have fallen in defence of the rights and liberties of it. If the plans succeed, of which I have no doubt, I am sure it will be a very productive and encreasing fund, and the monies thus applied will be a beneficial institun.

I am aware that my non-acceptance of these shares will have various motives ascribed to it, among which an ostentatious display of disinterestedness, perhaps the charge of disrespect or slight of the favors of my Country, may lead the van: but under a consciousness that my conduct herein is not influenced by considerations of this nature, and that I shall act more agreeably to my own feelings and more consistent with my early declarations, by declining to accept them; I shall not only hope for indulgence, but a favorable interpretation of my conduct: my friends, I persuade myself, will acquit me, the World I hope will judge charitably.

Perceiving by the advertisement of Messrs. Cabell, Buchanan and Southa; that half the sum required by the Act, for opening and extending the navigation of James river, is subscribed; and the 20th. of next month appointed for the subscribers to meet at Richmond,

I take the liberty of giving you a power to act for me on that occasion.⁸² I would (having the accomplishment of these navigations much at heart) have attended in person; but the President and Directors of the Potomac Company by their own appointment, are to commence the survey of this river in the early part of next month; for which purpose I shall leave home tomorrow. Besides which, if the Ejectments which I have been obliged to bring for my Land in Pennsylv. are to be tried at the September Term, as Mr. Smith, my Lawyer, conceived they would, and is to inform me, I shall find it necessary I fear,

Library of Congress

to attend the trial; an intermediate journey therefore, in addition, to Richmond would be impracticable for me to accomplish. I am, etc.

***To NOAH WEBSTER**

Mount Vernon, July 30, 1785.

Sir: I received your letter of the 19th. Instt.⁸³ Being convinced from the respectable characters whose names are prefixed to your Grammatical Institute, as well as from the cursory

82. Washington was elected president of the James River Navigation Co., but declined to serve. A copy of his power to Randolph to represent him at the James River meeting follows this letter in the "Letter Book."

83. Webster's letter, dated July 18, 1785, from Baltimore, is in the *Washington Papers*.

examination I have had it in my power to bestow on the Books, of the judicious execution, and usefulness of the Work; it would give me pleasure if I could be instrumental, in any degree, towards the introduction of it to public notice. But I am a little at a loss, from the purport of your letter, to decide, whether it is your desire that my name should appear amongst those who have already subscribed to the utility of the Work; or, by introducing its Author to some of the first characters in the Southern States (under the favourable impression he has made upon me) to act more remotely. If the first is meant, I wish to decline it; because I have not leizure to examine the Institute with that attention which ought, always, to precede a certificate; and because I do not think myself a competent Judge, if I had. But if the other is your object, I shall have great pleasure in giving you Letters of recommendation to some of the first Gentlemen of my Acquaintance in Charleston, or elsewhere, being Sir Yr. etc.

[N.Y.P.L.]

To WILLIAM BAILEY

Georgetown, 84 August 2, 1785.

Sir: By a letter which I lately received from Mr. Stoddert, I am informed that you had agreed to supply my nephews George and Lawrence Washington with such articles from your Store as their necessities might require. For which I thank you, and I have no doubt of your

84. According to his "Diary," Washington left Mount Vernon early in the morning of August 1 "and, after escorting Fanny Bassett to Alexandria, I proceeded to Doctr. Stuart's where I breakfasted; from thence to George Town to the Annual Meeting of the Potowmack Company appointed to be held at that place....Dined at Shuter's Tavern and lodged at Mr. Oneal's." Shuter's was John Suter's Tavern, and Bernard O'Neale (O'Neill, Oneal) was one of the stockholders of the Potomac Company.

On August 2 Washington left Georgetown about 10 o'clock a.m., dined at Thomas Beall's Mill, about 14 miles from Georgetown, and afterwards proceeded to Mr. Goldsborough's, at the head of Seneca Falls. From thence he went, on August 5, to Harper's Ferry by way of Frederick, Md. On August 6 he was at Harper's Ferry, and on August 10 he returned to Mount Vernon at about 9 o'clock in the evening.

doing it upon good terms: the amount of which I hope will always be ready when called for. But I have to beg Sir, that they may not be indulged in any extravagance, or with any thing improper; school boys of their size, and growing, should have decent, but not expensive things; their inclinations too often prompt them to the latter, which grows upon them in proportion as they are indulged: nor should they have pocket money given them, unless the necessity is apparent and the application approved of.

Library of Congress

Any advance for Dancing, French &ca., which may be directed by their Tutor Mr. Balch, will be chearfully repaid. I am, etc.⁸⁵

To JOHN SEDGWICK

Falls of Shannondoah, August 8, 1785.

Sir: In answer to your letter of this date, I think I may venture to assure you that no writ has issued by order, or under my authority, against the Exors and Security of your deceased Father, for the amount of a Bond passed by him to Colo. Tayloe⁸⁶ and myself, as Attornies for Colo. George Mercer and his Mortgagees, in England.

The high Court of Chancery of this Commonwealth decreed (I do not at this moment recollect when) that the Bonds, and other papers which were in my possession relative to this business (as my situation did not admit of my acting, and as I had refused to do so) should be given up to John Mercer Esqr., which was accordingly done.

If under this Decree such of the Bonds as were made payable to the Attornies aforesaid have been put in Suit in my name as the surviving Attorney; I *presume* it is a matter

⁸⁵. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

⁸⁶. John Tayloe.

of course: but how a Bond which you say has been discharged, and not among the papers which were surrendered, should be under this predicament, I am not able to inform you. I am, etc.⁸⁷

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

[Mount Vernon] August 13, 1785.

Library of Congress

Dear Sir: At the time your letter from the Rocks was delivered to me, I had neither pen, ink, paper, or a table to write on at command; consequently could only verbally acknowledge the receipt of it, which I did by Mr. Wormley:⁸⁸ since my return home I have met your other favor of the 29th. ulto.

The great object, for the accomplishment of which I wish to see the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James improved and extended, is to connect the Western Territory with the Atlantic States; all others, with me, are secondary: tho' I am clearly of opinion that it will greatly increase our commerce, and be an immense saving, in the article of transportation, and draft cattle, to the Planters and Farmers who are in a situation to have the produce of their labor water borne.

These being my sentiments, I wish to see the undertaking progress *equally* in both rivers; and but for my local situation, and numerous avocations, my attention to each should be alike: what little I do for the advancement of the enterprize

87. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

88. Ralph Wormley.

in this river, is done, as it were en passant; and because I think the difficulties greater than in the other, and not because I give it the preference, for both in my opinion have their advantages, without much, if any interference with each other. The advantages arising from my patronage of either, is probably more ideal than real; but such as they are, I wish them to be thought equally distributed: my contribution to the works shall be the same. I have already subscribed five shares to the Potomac navigation; and enclosed I give you a power to put my name down for five shares, to that of James river.

With respect to acting as President to the Board of Directors for that Company, it is a delicate subject for me to speak to: every person who knows how much my time (by company and other matters) is occupied, must also know that it would be impossible

Library of Congress

for me to discharge the duties of the office, as they should be; even here, where the business for the most part is, and will continue to be done at Alexandria, or George-town (eight miles further from me), it was so evident to me that I could not perform the duties of President with that diligence and propriety which I thought necessary, that I wish to decline it, but could not get excused: How much more would this be the case with James river, where the journey to it alone would be a work of time and labour: and besides, let it not be forgotten my Dr. Sir, that tho' *some* of the Subscribers may wish to see me at the head of the Board of Directors; yet there may be others who would feel disappointed and hurt if they are over looked, and this might have an influence on their connexions. I mention these things to you with the candour and frankness of a friend, and under the rose; after which your own judgment and those of your friends, must dictate for the best. I am persuaded all of us have the same object in view, and what ever shall be deemed, by the

concurrent voice of the subscribers, the best means to effect it, shall meet my hearty approbation.

My last letter was written to you in such haste, that I apprehend I was not sufficiently explicit to be understood. It was not my intention to apply for a copy of the Governor's instructions releasing him from the restriction of the Kings Proclamation; but for the order of Council consequent thereof, directing or permitting Warrants to issue on military rights, agreeably thereto: because if the date of this order had been found to be antecedent to the occupancy of my adversaries, it would remove them from their grand Fort, for on *possession* , before I took any *legal* steps, I know they mean to place their *sole* defence.

The Patent, and thousands of Warrants are evidences that the restrictions respecting military settlers was taken off; but they do not ascertain *the time* . My Patent, if I recollect right, was dated in July, 1774; but the occupants, according to their own accounts, possessed the Land in the Octobr. preceding; if therefore I could have obtained a Certificate of the loss of the Council Books; and any circumstance could have been

Library of Congress

recollected by which it should appear (as unquestionably the fact is) that the recognition of military rights was previous to October 1773, and so intimated in the Certificate aforesaid; it would have been useful: *Without* this indeed, the matter is so clear, in my judgment, as not to admit of dispute before an *impartial* Jury; but an *impartial* Jury I do not expect, and much less since I have heard that the high Sheriff of the County (lately chosen) is of the fraternity

of my competitors, and interested in the decision, so far at least as similar circumstances, and the suffrages of these people in his election, can bias him. Indeed I have lately been told that the decision of this case will be interesting to numbers whose rights are disputed on similar grounds. I am, &c.⁸⁹

To THE SHERIFF OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

Mount Vernon, August 15, 1785.

Sir: The enclosed came under cover to me: I send it to you, and beg it may be executed and returned in time.

Captn. Jacobs married the widow of Captn. Michael Cresap; which, if it was a fact unknown to you before, is given as a clue by which you may come at the parties, and serve the summons. I am, etc.⁸⁹

***To TENCH TILGHMAN**

Mount Vernon, August 17, 1785.

Dear Sir: The Baltimore Advertiser of the 12th. Instt. announces the arrival of a Ship at that Port, immediately from China; and by an advertisement in the same Paper, I perceive

⁸⁹. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

that the Cargo is to be sold at public Vendue, on the first of Octr. next.

At what prices the enumerated articles will sell, or the terms proposed, can only be known from the experiment; but if the quantity at Market is great, and they should sell as goods have Sold at Vendue, bargains may be expected. I therefore take the liberty of requesting the favor of you, in that case, to purchase the several things contained in the inclosed list.⁹¹

You will readily perceive, My dear Sir, my purchasing, or not, depends entirely upon the prices. If *great bargains* are to be had, I would supply myself agreeably to the list. If the prices do not fall *below* a cheap *retail* Sale, I would decline them altogether, or take such articles only (if cheaper than common) as are marked in the Margin of the Invoice.

Before October, if none of these Goods are previously sold, and if they are the matter will be ascertained thereby, you will be able to form a judgment of the prices they will command at Vendue. Upon information of which, I will deposit money in your hands to comply with the terms of the Sale.

Since I began this letter, I have been informed that good India Nankeens are selling at Dumfries (not far from me) at 7/6 a ps. this Curry. But if my memory has not failed me, I used to import them before the War for about 5/Sterlg. If so, though 50pr Ct. is a small advance upon India Goods, through a British Channel, (with the duties and accumulated charges thereon) yet, qua're would not 7/6 be a high price for Nankeens brought immediately from India, exempted from *such* duties and Charges?

91. This list, in Washington's writing, was inclosed in his letter to Tilghman. It called for the purchase of the following articles, Those "marked in the Margin of the Invoice" were so marked with a star:

A Sett of the best Nankin Table China

Library of Congress

Ditto, best Evening China Cups and Saucers

*A set of *large* blue and White China Dishes, say half a dozn., more or less

*1 Dozn. *small* bowls, blue and white.

*6 Wash hand Guglets and Basons

6 large Mugs, or 3 Mugs and 3 Jugs.

With the badge of the Society of the Cincinnati, if to be had

A Quartr. Chest, *best* Hyson Tea. A Leagure of Battavia Arrack if a Leagure is not large. About 13 yds. of good bla: Paduasoy. *A ps. of fine Muslin, plain. *1 ps. of Silk Handkerchiefs. 12 ps. of the best Nankeens. 18 ps. of the second quality, or coarsest kind, for Servants.

If this is a conjecture founded in fairness, it will give my ideas of the prices of other Articles from that Country, and be a government for your conduct therein, at, or before the day appointed for the public Vendue, with the highest esteem and regard I am etc.

[H.S.P.]

To BENJAMIN OGLE

Mount Vernon, August 17, 1785.

Sir: The enclosed from Mr. Dulaney did not come to my hands (being from home) until Sunday last. I thank you for your obliging offer of two or three Fawns; but presuming the season is now too far advanced either to catch or gentle them, I will not send before I hear further from you on this subject.

Library of Congress

If it is too late to obtain them this year, I would thank you for the like number next Spring; by which time I shall have a

proper inclosure for them, and for the Deer of this Country, of which I am also endeavouring to procure a stock to breed from.

With compliments to Mrs. Ogle, I have the honor, etc.⁸⁹

To THOMAS RIDOUT

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1785.

Sir: By the return of the Brig I was favored with your letter of the 1st. of May, with several cases of wine, and a box of sundries which came to hand in good order, and I presume are of good quality; as the wine which you sent to others is, I am informed, much esteemed, my own I have not tasted. I am obliged to you for sending these things, the amount shall be paid to Colo. Geo: Fitzgerald in a short time.

For your care of the enclosed letters, I will thank you: the one under a blank cover I shall be obliged to you for giving the proper address of the Father of Baron de Montesquieu; from whom I received a letter,⁹² but under such a signature as leaves me at a loss how to direct my answer to him. If my letter to the Baron is like to subserve the purpose for which it was intended, it will give me pleasure.

The small packages which the Marqs. de la Fayette intended to send by your Brig, must, I presume, have miscarried between Paris and Bourdeau, as his letters to me speak positively as

89. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

92. This letter, dated May 2, 1785, is in the *Washington Papers*, and is signed "Secondat."

to their being sent from the former place. I am, etc.⁹³

To JEAN BAPTISTE, BARON DE SECONDAT

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1785.

Sir: By a brig belonging to Mr. Ridout of Bourdeaux, I had the honor to receive your letter of the 2d. of May and the Wine which accompanied it; which you were so obliging as to send me at the request of your worthy son, it came in very good order. For this instance of his kind remembrance and your polite attention, I pray you to accept my warmest acknowledgments: my thanks are due also in a particular manner to you, Sir, for the walnuts you sent me, which are very fine; and I shall endeavour to propagate them in the manner directed by you.

I pray you to forward, when you shall find a convenient opportunity, the enclosed letter for the Baron de Montesquieu, with assurances of my sincere regard and friendship for him, I have the honor, etc.⁹³

To BARON DE MONTESQUIEU⁹⁴

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1785.

Sir: The receiving a letter from you is pleasing, the expression of it is flattering; and for the valuable testimony of your recollection of me, I pray you to accept my warmest

93. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

94. Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, Marquis de La Brède, grandson of the author of "L'Esprit des Lois."

acknowledgments.

Library of Congress

The bare intimation of your once more making a visit to the Land, to the liberties of which your sword has contributed, is flattering, and should you realize it, I hope you will consider my seat as your head quarters whilst you remain in the United States. I can assure you, you would no where meet with a more cordial reception, or give more pleasure, as I have ever had a high esteem and regard for you: but whether in this town, or any other to which you may be called by duty or inclination, my warmest wishes shall always attend you, being Dr. Sir Yrs., etc.⁹⁵

To—VAN DRILLON

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Sir: Thro' the hands of Mr. Van Berkel, I had the honor to receive your letter of the first of March.

It rests with a General Meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati to admit foreigners as honorary members; tho' it has been done by many of the State Societies, where the subject proposed was a resident. The general Meeting is triennial, and will not assemble again before May 1787; but if my memory serves me, there were some particular reasons given at the last, which induced a resolution to suspend the further appointment of honorary members, as well citizens as

95. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

foreigners: but if I should be mistaken in this, I shall have great pleasure in proposing you as a member of that body, which have associated for the purpose, amongst others, of commemorating the great events to which, under providence, they owe the deliverance of their country from systematic tyranny.

With a grateful sense of the flattering expression of your letter, and with much esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.⁹⁶

96. On August 22 Washington also wrote briefly to Van Berckel, asking him to forward this letter, a copy of which is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Sir: Both your letters of the 16th. have come safe. As you have engaged the clover seed of Mr. Wormeley's manager, I will take one bushel of it; tho' I had no idea of giving so high a price, as I could have got the same quantity from Philada. (I suppose equally good) for half the sum. If you send it to the care of Mr. Hartshorne in Alexanda. it will come safe, and the sooner it is done the better: pay for it out of the first money you receive for any use.

I am willing to take your Wheat, if it is free from the Fly, well cleaned and of good quality; provided it is delivered at my Mill, the road to which (by being less used) is better than that to Alexandria or Dumfries. My prices are always governed by the Alexandria *Cash* market; for I neither give more, nor expect it for less: The price current there at present (according to Richard's Gazette) is five shillings; but the state of our Trade at this time is so uncertain, that it is almost impossible to determine whether it will be more, or less.

If the present restriction of our commerce continues, the manufacturing of Wheat must be broken up altogether; as the West India markets which afford the greatest demands for our Flour, are shut against our Vessels. If you choose to take the certainty of five shillings for your wheat, it may be a bargain at that, provided you determine immediately: or if you prefer to abide by the rise, or fall of the Alexandria market, I am willing

to do this also, if you will fix a period at which you shall determine to accept the price which is then existing; by this I mean, (and it is necessary to declare it in order to avoid misunderstandings,) that if you should be from the first of October to the first of April, for instance, in delivering your Crop, I shall not think myself under an obligation to allow the highest price that may be given within those periods; because the price may rise to

Library of Congress

six shillings, and then *fall* to five; according to the demand arising from circumstances. It would therefore be as unreasonable for you to expect that I should give the highest price at which wheat had sold within the before mentioned periods, as for me to suppose that you ought to take the lowest. However, to be more clearly understood (if the price is to be regulated by the Alexandria *cash* market, for I shall not be governed by what they offer in *goods*), it must be the price of the day on which you determine to take it' that is, if it should start from 5/. and keep rising 'till, by the first of Deer. it had reached 6/., and on that day you inform me personally, or by letter, that you will take the market price, I shall think myself obliged to allow 6/. for your Crop: On the other hand, if you expect the price will get higher, and wait for its doing so until it falls to 4/., I will pay no more than 4/. for it.

I have been thus explicit because I dislike disputes and wish to avoid them; which makes it necessary to mention another case which sometimes happens; and that is, that what a few bushels of wheat may sell for; or what a Merchant, when he has got a vessel nearly loaded, may give rather than detain her at high charges, is not to be considered as the market price. You are not in a situation (having your wheat to transport from a distant part) to take advantage of the case last mentioned; and a few bushels of particular wheat, or wheat for particular

uses, can have no influence upon the general price which is always very well established in a place of such trade as Alexandria. After all I confess it would be more agreeable to me to fix a price between ourselves: but I cannot at the time exceed 5/. as that is the price now current.

When you come down in Octr. I shall be glad to see you here; by that time I expect to have the accounts against my Tenants brought into some kind of order. If you could engage me about 250 wt. of good fall butter, from such farmers as you can depend upon for the quality and their punctuallity. I should be obliged to you: if you let me have your wheat, the butter may come down occasionally with that. I am, etc.¹⁰

To WILLIAM GRAYSON

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Dear Sir: During my tour up the Potomac River, with the Directors to examine and to form a plan for opening and extending the navigation of it, agreeably to the acts of the Virginia and Maryland Assemblies, your favor of the 25th. came to this place, with the letters brought by the son of Mr. Adams⁵ from France; for your care of which I thank you. Appropos, did you hear him say anything of Hounds which, the Marqs. de la Fayette has written to me, were commit

10. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

5. John Quincy Adams.

ted to his care ?6 If he really brought them (and if he did not I am unable to account for the information) it would have been civil in the young Gentleman to have dropped me a line respecting the disposal of them, especially as war is declared against the canine species in New York, and they being strangers, and not having formed any alliances for self-defence, but on the contrary, distressed and friendless may have been exposed not only to war, but to pestilence and famine also. If you can say any thing on this subject pray do so.

I thank you for the several articles of intelligence contained in your letter, and for the propositions respecting a coinage of Gold, Silver and Copper; a measure which in my opinion is become indispensably necessary: Mr. Jefferson's ideas upon this subject are plain and simple; well adapted, I think, to the nature of the case, as he has exemplified by the plan.⁷ Without a Coinage, or without some stop can be put to the cutting and clipping of money; our Dollars, pistareens &c. will be converted (as Teague says) into *five* quarters;

Library of Congress

and a man must travel with a pair of money scales in his pocket, or run the risk of receiving Gold at one fourth less by weight than it counts.

I have ever been a friend to adequate Congressional powers; consequently wish to see the ninth article of the Confederation amended and extended' Without these powers we cannot support a national character, and must appear contemptable in the eyes of Europe; but to you My Dr. Sir, I will candidly confess, that in my opinion, it is of little avail to give these to Congress: the members seem to be so much afraid of exerting those which they already have, that no opportunity is slipped of surrendering them, or referring the exercise of them, to the States individually: instance your late ordinance respecting the disposal of the Western Lands; in which no State, with the smallest propriety,

6. The hounds were taken care of by Dr. John Cochran, while in New York, and sent to Mount Vernon in a Captain Packard's sloop. John Quincy Adams had evidently found the task of escorting them across the ocean distasteful. Grayson's answer to this letter is dated Sept. 5, 1785, and is in the *Washington Papers*.

7. Jefferson's plan, which used the dollar as the unit and divided it decimally, was the one adopted by Congress.

could have obtruded an interference. No doubt but the information of Congress from the back Country is better than mine respecting the operation of this ordinance; but i have understood from some sensible people therefrom, that besides running⁸ they do not know where to purchase, the Lands are of so versatile a nature, that to the end of time they will not, by those who are acquainted therewith, be purchased either in Townships or by square miles: this, if I recollect right, was the sentiment I delivered to you on the first mention of the matter; but past experience you said was brought forward in support of the measure, and appealed to for the issue. I submitted therefore to its decision, but still retained my opinion of the matter.

Library of Congress

We have got the Potomac navigation in hand: workmen are employ'd under the best manager and assistants we could obtain, at the Falls of Shenandoah and Seneca; and I am happy to inform you that, upon a critical examination of them by the Directors, the manager and myself, we are unanimously of opinion that the difficulties at these two places, do not exceed the expectations we had formed of them; and that the navigation thro' them, might be effected without the aid of Locks: how far we may have been deceived with respect to the first (as the water, tho' low may yet fall) I shall not decide; but we are not mistaken I think in our conjectures of the other. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.⁹

8. Carelessness of the "Letter Book" recorder. The meaning seems to be that besides the difficulty in running boundary lines.

9. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JAMES McHENRY

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your letter of the first inst: came to this place whilst I was absent on a tour up the river, or an earlier acknowledgment of it shou'd have been sent to you: the inclosure shall, either by this or the next post, be sent to Dr. Gordon for his information, and that justice may be done to a character so deserving American gratitude and the pen of an historian, as the Marqs. de la Fayette.

I am very glad to hear that Congress are relieved from the embarrassment which originated with Longchamp:⁹⁷ had the demand of him been persisted in, it might have involved very serious consequences; it is better for the Court of France to be a little vexed, than for it to have perservered in the demand of him.

Library of Congress

As I have ever been a friend to adequate powers of Congress, without which it is evident to me we never shall establish a national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe, I am sorry I cannot agree with you in sentiment not to enlarge them for the regulating of commerce. I have neither time nor abilities to enter into a full discussion of this subject, but it should seem to me that your arguments against it; principally, that some States may be more benefited than others by a commercial regulation, apply to every matter of general utility; for can there be a case enumerated in which this argument has not its force in a greater or less degree? We are either a united people under one head, and for federal purposes; or we are thirteen independant sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other: if the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the Constitution⁹⁸ points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should, in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority: let the southern States always be represented; let them act more in union;

97. Chevalier Longchamp. He had assaulted Barbé Marbois in a street in Philadelphia and, although arrested, tried, found guilty, imprisoned, and fined by the Pennsylvania courts, France demanded that he, as a French subject, should be surrendered to her and sent to Paris for trial. (See the *Journals of the Continental Congress* for 1784 and 1785.

98. The Articles of Confederation.

let them declare freely and boldly what is for the interest of, and what is prejudicial to their constituents; and there will, there *must* be an accommodating spirit; in the establishment of a navigation act, this in a particular manner ought, and will doubtless be attended to. If the assent of nine (or as some propose, of eleven) States is necessary to give validity to a Commercial system; it insures this measure, or it cannot be obtained: Wherein then lies the danger? But if your fears are in danger of being realized, cannot certain provisos in the ordinance guard against the evil? I see no difficulty in this, if the southern Delegates would give their attendance in Congress, and follow the example, if it should be set them, of hanging together to counteract combinations. I confess to you candidly, that I can foresee

Library of Congress

no evil greater than disunion than those *unreasonable* jealousies (I say *unreasonable* , because I would have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils to the prevention of real ones.

As you have asked the question, I answer, I do not know that we can enter upon a war of Imposts with Gt: Britain, or any other foreign power; but we are certain that this war has been waged agst. us by the former, *professedly* upon a belief that we never could unite in opposition to it; and I *believe* there is no way of putting an end to, or at least of stopping the encrease of it, but to convince them of the contrary. Our trade in all points of view, is as essential to G: B: as hers is to us; and she will

exchange it upon reciprocal and liberal terms, if better cannot be had. It can hardly be supposed, I think, that the carrying business will devolve wholly on the States you have named, or remain long with them if it should; for either G: B: will depart from her present contracted system; or the policy of the southern States in framing the Act of navigation, or by Laws passed by themselves individually, will devise ways and means to encourage seaman for the transportation of the product of their respective Countries, or for the encouragement of .99 But admitting the contrary; if the Union is considered as permanent, (and on this I presume all superstructures are built) had we not better encourage seamen among ourselves, with less imports, than divide it with foreigners, and by increasing the amount of them, ruin our Merchants and greatly injuring the mass of our Citizens?

To sum up the whole, I foresee, or think I do it, the many advantages which will arise from giving powers of this kind to Congress (if a sufficient number of States are required to exercise them) without any evil, save that which may proceed from inattention, or want of wisdom in the formation of the act; whilst without them we stand in a ridiculous point of view in the eyes of the nations of the world with whom we are attempting to enter into Commercial treaties, without means of carrying them into effect; who must see and feel

Library of Congress

that the Union, or the States individually are sovereigns as best suits their purposes; in a word, that we are one nation today, and thirteen to-morrow, who will treat with us on such terms ? But perhaps I have gone too far, and therefore will only add that Mrs. Washington offers her compliments and best wishes for you and that with great esteem etc.¹

99. Blank in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Dear Sir: In my absence with the Directors of the Potomac navigation, to examine the river and fix a plan of operations, your favor begun on the 23d. and ended the 31st. of July came to this place.² I am sorry to hear of your late indisposition, but congratulate you on your recovery; hoping the reestablishment of your health may be of long continuance.

The Packet which you were so obliging as to send for me, came safe; and I thank you for your care of it, but for want of knowledge of the language, I can form no opinion of my own of the Dramatic performance of Monsr. Serviteur la Barbier.³

The current of my information from France is, that the dispute between the Emperor and Holland will be accommodated without bloodshed; but after the explicit declarations which have been made on both sides, I do not see how either (especially the first) can recede from their claims. To save appearances, and to let the contending parties down *handsomely*, say some of my letters, is now the greatest difficulty; but all agree that a spark may set the whole in flames, indeed, Bavaria it is expected will do this.

It is to be hoped that our Minister at the Court of London will bring that Government to an explanation respecting the Western Posts, which it still retains on the American side the

Library of Congress

line, contrary to the spirit, if not the letter of the Treaty. My opinion from the first, and so I declared it, was that these posts would be detained

2. Richard Henry Lee's letter of July 23, to which this letter is the reply, says: "Is it possible that a plan can be formed for issuing a large sum of paper money by the next Assembly? I do 'verily believe that the greatest foes we have in the world could not devise a more effectual plan for ruining Virginia. I should suppose, that every friend to his country, every honest and sober man would join heartily to reprobate so nefarious a plan of speculation." Lee's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

3. Le Barbier, jr. His letter of March 4 is in the *Washington Papers*, but his drama concerning Captain Asgill is not now found therein. Barbier had also sent the drama to the President of Congress.

from us, as long as they could be held under any pretence whatsoever. I have not changed it, tho' I wish for cause to do so, as it may become a serious matter. However singular the opinion may be, I cannot divest myself of it: that the navigation of the Mississippi, *at this time* ought to be no object with us: on the contrary untill we have a little time allowed to open and make easy the ways between the Atlantic States and the Western Territory, the obstruction had better remain. There is nothing which binds one Country or one State to another but interest; without this cement the Western Inhabitants (who more than probably will be composed in a great degree of Foreigners) can have no predilection for us; and a Commercial connexion is the only tie we can have upon them. It is clear to me that the trade of the Lakes, and of the river Ohio as low as the Great Kanhawa if not to the Falls, may be brought to the Atlantic ports easier and cheaper, taking the *whole* voyage together, than it can be carried to New Orleans: but once open the door to the latter, before the obstructions are removed from the former, let commercial connexions, which lead to others, be formed, and the habit of that trade well established, and it will be found to be no easy matter to divert it: and vice versa. When the settlements are stronger and more extended to the westward; the navigation of the Mississippi will be

Library of Congress

an object of importance; and we shall then be able (reserving our claim) to speak a more efficacious language than policy, I think dictate at present.

I never have, and I hope never shall, hear any serious mention of a paper emission in this State; yet such a thing may be in agitation. Ignorance and design are productive of much mischief: the first are the tool of the latter, and are often set to work suddenly and unexpectedly. Those with whom I have conversed on the subject in this part of the State, reprobate the idea exceedingly.

We have lately had the pleasure of Miss Lee's and Miss Hannah's company at this place; they were both well five days ago. Mrs. Washington prays you to accept her compliments; and with sentiments of great respect, esteem, and regard, I am, &c.

P.S. Your name, I well remember, stands among those of the subscribers, for a share in the Potomac navigation.⁴

To JOHN RAWLINS

Mount Vernon, August 29, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 20th. of this month, only came to my hands by the last Post, or I would have replied to it sooner.

I have a room 32 by 24 feet, and 16 feet pitch, which I want to finish in stucco; it is my intention to do it in a plain neat style; which, independantly of its being the present taste, (as I am inform'd) is my choice. The Chimney is in the centre of the longest side, for which I have a very elegant marble piece; directly opposite thereto is a Venetian window, of equal breadth and pitch of the room; on each side of the chimney is a door, leading into other rooms, and on each of the short sides is a door and window.

I mention these things that you may be apprized of the sort of work; the time it may take you to execute it, and that you may inform me upon what terms; and also, if you are

Library of Congress

inclined to undertake it, that you may have leisure to think of a design. The season being so far

4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

advanced, I had given up the idea of doing anything to the room this year; but if I could enter upon the work with well founded assurances of accomplishing it soon, I am ready and willing to go on with it immediately; having by me stucco, and seasoned plank for the floor and other parts (if necessary) and good Joiners of my own to execute what may be wanting in their way.

You will please to let me hear from you without delay on this subject, and I pray you to be explicit; because, as I would undertake it at once, or not at all this year, I should like to know your terms and sentiments precisely, that I may govern myself accordingly. I am, etc.¹¹

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, August 29, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 25th. in answer to mine of the preceeding week, came safe. At the time I wrote that letter, I was uninformed of the circumstances with which you have since made me acquainted; however, you will be at no loss from the contents of it, to discover that I had in contemplation *Bargains* , which, from the quantity of Goods at Market, scarcity of cash according to newspaper Accounts, distress of the Trade, and the mode of selling, I thought might probably be obtained: but if I am mistaken herein, I shall content myself with the few *marked* articles, or such of them as can be had cheap. Fine Jaconette¹² Muslin (apron width) is what Mrs. Washington wants, and about five or seven yards would do. As the Arrack is in large Casks, and new, I decline taking any.

If Mr. O'Donnel¹³ should feel an

Library of Congress

11. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
12. In the text of this letter, printed in a sales catalogue in 1907–8, this word is "Jaccanet."
13. Owner of the ship from India and China, which brought the goods to the port of Baltimore.

inclination to visit this part of Virginia, I shall be happy in seeing him: and if, instead of furnishing him with a *letter* of introduction, you should change the mode and introduce him in your own propria personae, it would add much to the pleasure of the visit. Before your letter was received,¹⁴ from my reading, or rather from an imperfect recollection of what I had read, I had conceived an idea that the Chinese, tho' droll in shape and appearance, were yet white.

I am glad to hear that my packet to Mr. Smith had got safely to hand, as there were papers of consequence transmitted. I expect some other Documents for my Law suit in the course of a few days, from our Attorney General; which I shall take the liberty of enclosing to you, to be forwarded to Mr. Smith; and as I seem to be in the habit of giving you trouble, I beg the favor of you to cause the enclosed to be delivered. I leave it open for your perusal, my reason for it is, that thereby seeing my wants, you may be so obliging as to let me know your opinion of Mr. Rawlins with respect to his abilities and diligence as a workman; whether he is reckoned moderate or high in his charges; and whether at this time there is much call for a workman of his profession, in Baltimore; for on this I presume his high or moderate terms will greatly depend.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best respects to Mrs. Tilghman, and thanks her for her obliging assurance of chusing the articles she wants perfect in their kind. With great esteem and regard, I am, etc.

Library of Congress

P.S. Since writing the above Mrs. W—n, requests me to add, that if any fine thin handkerchiefs with striped or worked borders are to be had, she would be glad to get six of them.¹⁵

14. Tilghman's letter (in the *Washington Papers* under date of Aug. 25, 1785) described the crew of O'Donnell's ship.

15. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ARTHUR ST. CLAIR

Mount Vernon, August 31, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 21st. ulto. inclosing a letter written in behalf of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Pennsylvania on the 9th. of July in the preceding year, came to this place in my absence on a tour up the river Potomac with the Directors, to examine the obstructions and to point out a mode for the improvement and extension of its navigation.

I am perfectly convinced that if the first institution of this Society had not been parted with, 'ere this we should have had the country in an uproar, and a line of separation drawn between this society and their fellow citizens. The alterations which took place at the last general Meeting have quieted the clamours which in many of the States were rising to a great height; but I have not heard yet of the incorporation of any Society by the State to which it belongs, wch is an evidence in my mind, that the jealousies of the people are rather asleep than removed on this occasion.

I am always made happy, when I hear that any of my fellow labourers have received appointments that may in some measure compensate them for their past services and losses in the late revolution: I feel it in two respects, first, as it benefits the individual, and next, as it is a testimony of public gratitude, be assured then My Dr. Sir, that your appointment to the office which you now hold¹⁶ gave me much pleasure, as I am told the

Library of Congress

emoluments of it are handsome. My best wishes will ever attend you' with sincere esteem and regard, I am, etc.¹⁷

16. In the Pennsylvania Council of Censors.

17. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To DOCTOR JOHN COCHRAN

Mount Vernon, August 31, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 9th. by Capt. Packard accompanying the Hounds sent by the Marqs. de la Fayette to your care for me, came safely to my hands a few days ago; for the trouble you have had with the latter I offer you my thanks; and if any expences have been incurred previous to their reimbarcation at New York, I will pay them upon the first notice.

I persuade myself you are too well convinced my Dr. Doctor of my friendship, and of my inclination to promote your interest or wishes, to doubt my ready compliance with the request of your letter (respecting the office of Continental treasurer) if it comported with the line of conduct which I had prescribed for my government. But from my knowledge of the composition of Congress, the State politics of its members, and their endeavors to fill every civil office with a citizen from their own State, if not altogether,

at least by compromise, that I took up an early determination not to hazard the mortification of a refusal, or of the passing by my application; by not asking *anything* from it, and to this resolution I was further prompted by the numberless applications with which it was impracticable, and in many instances would have been improper, for me to comply. Except in a single one, and that not pointed to any office directly, I have never gone beyond the general recommendation which accompanied my resignation, nor do I *believe* I ever shall.

Library of Congress

Mrs. Washington who does not enjoy good health, presents her compliments to, and offers best wishes for Mrs. Cochran and yourself to which please to add and accept those of Dear Sir etc.¹⁸

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, August 31, 1785.

Dr. Sir: In my absence from home on a tour up this river, to view the nature of it and to direct the improvements agreeably the Acts of Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland; the enclosed memoirs arrived here, covered by a letter, of which the following is an extract, from a member of Congress.¹⁹

As I am fully persuaded it is your wish to transmit to posterity a true history of the Revolution, and of course you desire to receive every information which will enable you to do justice to the principal Actors therein; it cannot be unpleasing to you to receive a narrative of unadorned facts which serve to bring forward

18. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

19. At this point the "Letter Book" has the footnote reference: "See Mr. McHenry's Letter to me dated 1st, Augt. 1785;" but this letter is not now found in either the *Washington Papers* or the *McHenry Papers*.

circumstances which, in some measure, may be unknown to you: I therefore make no apology for transmitting the enclosed; nor shall I do more than hint to you, the propriety of keeping the Marquis's wishes in this business, behind the Curtain; your own good sense must dictate the measure, and furnish the reason for it.

The noble, conspicuous, and disinterested part which this Nobleman has acted on the American theatre deserves all the gratitude which this Country can render him, and all the

Library of Congress

elope which the pen of a faithful historian can bestow, with its appearing to be the object of his wishes.

The family is as well as usual; Mrs. Stuart has been sick, but is now getting better. Mrs. Washington does not enjoy good health, but joins me in best respects to Mrs. Gordon. I am, etc.²⁰

To MARIE GABRIEL ELÉANOR, COMTE D'OILLIAMSON

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

Sir: I have just received seven very fine Hounds, for which, the Marqs. de la Fayette informs me, I am indebted to your goodness. I know not in what terms to acknowledge my gratitude for the obligation, but pray you to be assured that I have a due sense of the honor; and feel in a particular manner the force of the goodness of Madame la Comtesse, to whom the Marqs. adds, I am beholden for a *favorite* hound. I pray you to offer my best

²⁰. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

respects, and to make my acknowledgment of this favor, acceptable to her: at the sametime I beg you to assure her that her favorite shall not suffer under my care, but become the object of my particular attention. I have the honor, etc.²⁴

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

My Dr. Humphreys: In the latter part of July I wrote to you very fully, since which I have received your favor of May. As nothing has occurred since that period worthy of observation, except that the Indians, supposed to be instigated thereto by the B— are getting more and more out of humour, this letter will be shorter than I usually write to you.

Library of Congress

I find by your last that your time has been more occupied by your official duty than I had conceived; for, to be frank, I supposed that amusements more than business had been the occasion of the brevity of your letters to me.

The times are dull with us, the Assemblies are in their recess; and the Merchants are preparing petitions to them respectively to enlarge the powers of Congress for Commercial purposes. In Congress I understand diversity of opinion prevails respecting the extent of these powers. They are also deliberating on the establishment of a Mint for the Coinage of Gold, Silver and copper; but nothing final is yet resolved on respecting either. Our winter has been severe, but different (in the middle States) from the one you last saw in America; it was long, wet and disagreeable. We are just emerging from a drought which it was supposed eight days ago, would have annihilated the Indian Corn in the lower parts of this, and the neighbouring

24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington papers*.

States; and tho' it has been raining incessantly for several days past, I am of opinion that a great deal of the corn is irrecoverably lost for want of the farina (the tassel being dry) to impregnate the young shoots. The calamity which you apprehended from the drought which had followed the hard Winter in France, has yielded I hope, to more pleasing prospects.

I thank you for your attention to the Medal which was voted for me by Congress,²⁵ I expected it was to have remained on the Journals of that honl. Body as a dead letter; and never having hinted, so I never intended to hint my knowledge of such a Vote; or my apprehension of the effect of it, to any one in power or in Office. You may believe me sincere when I assure you that I am, etc.²⁶

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

My dr. Marqs.: Since my last to you, I have been favored with your letters of the 11th. and 13th. of May by young Mr. Adams, who brought them to New York, from whence they came safely to this place by the Post' the first is a *Cypher* ; and for the communications therein contained I thank you: My best wishes will always accompany your undertakings; but remember my dear friend it is a part of the military art to reconnoitre and *feel* your way, before you engage too deeply. More is oftentimes

25. On the occasion of the evacuation of Boston in 1776.

26. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

effected by regular approaches, than by an open assault; from the first too, you may make a good retreat; from the latter (in case of repulse) it rarely happens.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Adams²¹ will bring the British ministry to some explanation respecting the western posts. Nothing else can, I conceive, disturb the tranquillity of these States; but if I am mistaken in this conjecture, you know my sentiments of, and friendship for you too well to doubt my inclination to serve *you* to the utmost of your wishes, and my powers.

It gives me very singular pleasure to find the court of France relaxing in their demand of Longchamps; to have persisted in it would have been a very embarrassing measure to this Country under the Laws and Constitution of the Federal Government, and those of the several parts which compose it.

The Hounds which you were so obliging as to send me arrived safe, and are of promising appearance; to Monsieur le Comte Doilliamson (if I miscall him, your handwriting is to blame, and in honor you are bound to rectify the error); and in an *especial* manner to his fair Competesse, my thanks are due for this favor: the enclosed letter which I give you the

Library of Congress

trouble of forwarding contains my acknowledgement of their obliging attention to me on this occasion.

If I recollect right, the letter which was written by the Marquis de St. Simon was on the business of the Cincinnati, and was laid before the general meeting at Philadelphia in May 1784; consequently, the answer must have proceeded from the Society either especially to him, or generally, thro' the Counts de Estaing and Rochambeau, who were written to as the heads of the naval and military members of that Society in France; but as all the papers relative to the business of the Society were deposited in the care of the Secretary, General Knox, or the assistant

21. John Adams.

Secretary, Williams,²² I have them not to refer to; but will make enquiry and inform you or the Marqs. de St. Simon more particularly of the result.

Your constant attention, and unwearied endeavors to serve the interests of these United States, cannot fail to keep alive in them a grateful sensibility of it; and the affectionate regard of all their citizens for you. The footing on which you have established a market for whale oil must be equally pleasing and advantageous to the States which are more immediately engaged in that commerce.

Having heard nothing further of the Jacks which were to be sent to me from Spain, and which by Mr. Carmichael's letter (enclosing one from the Count de Florida Bianca) of the 3d. Decr. were actually purchased for me at that date, I am at a loss to account for the delay, and am apprehensive of some accident. Be this as it may, if you could My Dr. Marquis, thro' the medium of Admiral Suffrein, or by any other means that would not be troublesome, procure me a male or female, or *one* of the former and *two* of the latter, upon the terms mentioned in your letter of the 3d. of May, I should think it a very fortunate event and shou'd feel myself greatly indebted to your friendship. The Mules which proceed from the mixture of these Animals with the horse, are so much more valuable under the care

Library of Congress

which is usually bestowed on draught cattle by our Negroes, that I am daily more anxious to obtain the means for propagating them.

When George returns from the Springs and gets a little fixed, I will set him about copying your letters to me,

22. Otho Holland Williams. He was assistant secretary general of the Society of the Cincinnati.

which will be better than to hazard the originals at Sea, where an accident might occasion the loss of them to both of us. In my last I informed you of his intended marriage, which I suppose will take place in the early part of next month.

I should have given an earlier acknowledgment of your letters of the 11th. and 13th. of May aforementioned, had I been at home when they came to this place, but at that time I was on a tour up this river with the Directors (Johnson, Lee, Fitzgerald and Gilpin) to examine the obstructions, and to fix upon a plan of operations; which having done, we commenced our labours on the 5th. of last month, under a full persuasion that the work will not prove more arduous than we had conceived before the difficulties were explored. The James River Company, I by my last accounts from Richmond, is formed; a meeting of the members was summoned to be held on the 20th. of last month, but what the determinations of it were, I have not yet heard; Nor (so barren are the times) have I a tittle of news to communicate to you; the several assemblies are in their recesses but will be addressed I presume at their autumnal meetings by the commercial interests of the United States to vest Powers in Congress to regulate the Trade of the Union which they see clearly must be directed by one head in order to obtain consistency and respectability at home and abroad. I am, etc.²³

23. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To LAMAR, HILL, BISSETT & CO²⁷

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

Gentn: I am honored with your favor of the 22d. of June. As I have been very unlucky hitherto, in the transportation of Wine (in the common Craft of the Country) from one port, or one from one river to another; I had rather the old Maderia ordered by Mr. Hill²⁸ for my use should remain with you (as I am not in immediate want) until a conveyance may offer directly to Alexandria. But if this is not likely to happen soon, and you should think it safe to Ship it to the address of Doctr. Taylor²⁹ of Norfolk; I should be glad in that case, to have it well secured against adulteration; for I had rather lose the whole, than to have part taken out and the deficiency supplied with water, which is too common a practice with the river Shippers. Or if neither of these is done, I would next pray that Doctr. Taylor may be requested to detain the Wine in his cellar until a conveyance, on which he can rely, may offer to Alexandria, or to my house which is nine miles below on the bank of the river. I am, etc.

27. Of Madeira.

28. Henry Hill, in Philadelphia.

29. Dr. James Taylor.

To THOMAS NEWTON, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, September 3, 1785.

Sir: I am now about to inform you of the reason why I suffered your letter of the 27th. of April, with its enclosures, to remain so long unacknowledged.

In an absence of almost nine years from home, my private concerns had got so much deranged, and my accounts and papers. by the frequent hasty removal of the latter to get them out of the reach of the enemy when their shipping appeared, had got into such

Library of Congress

a jumble and confusion that it was next to impossibility for me, without spending much time, to adjust the former: I still hoped however that after awhile I should have been able to accomplish it, and that long 'ere this I should have sent you a statement of the account as it stands between us. But reckoning without my host, I have been obliged to hire a Clerk to settle all my accounts, and to take this business off my hands; as from a variety of circumstances I found it impracticable for me to attend to it myself.

Inclosed is his statement of the account between you and me, made out from my books and your return of Sales. The balance from his accot. differs widely from yours; arising first from the charge of Jacob Williams's payment of £178.9.8. to James Hill; whereas £50. only of that sum, according to Lund Washington's accot. (who superintended my business) was received from Williams. Secondly, from £123.7.4.½ charged me, as paid by Mr. Wm. Holt, of which I have no account. Thirdly, between £174. charged me as paid to Colo. Lewis, and my credit of £170 *only* which was received from him; and lastly, from the Debts yet due, amounting pr. your List to £175.16.2. The three first of these you will please to enquire into; and the last, to use the most speedy, and which to you may seem the most effectual, means of obtaining them.

The sum which is in your hands, I could wish to have remitted, or an order given me on some Gentleman in Alexandria: Or, which *in part* would answer my purpose equally, I wou'd take one hundred pair of large, strong and well made Negro Shoes, provided I could have them at a reasonable price and by the 20th. of October; formerly I know these were to be had at Norfolk readily; and it is essential for me to know immediately, whether, I may depend upon you for them or not.

The Drought has been so severe in these parts, that my Mill was entirely stopped: the rain which has fallen within these ten days, has done no more than to enable her to grind for my own consumption, when I begin to manufacture I will consign you a parcel of superfine flour, as well to try the Norfolk Market, as to prove a new Miller whom I have lately got, and who comes well recommended to me from some of the best Judges in Pennsylvania.

Library of Congress

If you should be able at any time to put me in a way of securing the Debt due to me from Balfour and Baran,³⁰ it would be rendering me a very acceptable service: Without this, or unless some proof could be had (as I believe the fact undoubtedly is) of the partnership of these Gentlemen or connexion in this business with Messrs. Hanburys of London, I must loose upwards of £2000 by my sale of Flour to them.³¹ With great esteem and regard I am, etc.³²

30. Balfour & Barrand, merchants of Hampton, Va.

31. The flour had been furnished in the year 1775.

32. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To DAVID HENLEY

Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785.

Sir: I am sorry the enclosed account should be brought against me in my private character: it is a fact which I thought had been well known to all the public Departments, and to those employed by the public, that expences of the nature of Otis and Henley's Accots. (which is for clothing for the servants I was obliged to employ in my public character) were paid from the public funds.

If I mistake not Otis & Henley were Agents for the purpose of supplying clothing (or materials for it) for the Army; to them in this character I apply'd; and never until the enclosed account was presented, had I any other idea of the matter, than that the amount had been settled for by them in their public accounts. As this is not the case, had it been presented to me whilst I had authority so to do, I should have ordered the paymaster to have discharged it; but as the matter now stands, I can do no more than certify that the Goods were receiv'd on public account for my use; for I really cannot pay for them out of my private purse. It is to be regretted that the matter has lain over so long. I am, etc.

Certificate.

I certify that the Goods which are charged within were required on public account to clothe the servants who attended me in my public character; and is a proper charge against the United States, not against me as a private person, who derived no other benefit therefrom.³⁵

35. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX

Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I am your debtor for two letters, one of the 12th. of Decemr., the other of the 8th. of April. Since the receipt of the first, I have paid my respects to you in a line by a Majr. Swan; but as it was introductory only of him, it requires an apology, rather than entitles me to a credit in our epistolary correspondence.

If I had as good a nack my dear Marquis, as you have at saying handsome things, I would endeavor to pay you in kind for the flattering expressions of your letters, having an ample field to work in; but as I am a clumsy workman in the manufactory of compliments, I must first profess my unworthiness of those which you have bestowed on me, and my inability to meet you on that ground; and therefore will not expose myself in the attempt.

It gives me great pleasure to find by my letters from France, that the dark clouds which hung over your hemisphere, are vanishing before the all-cheating Sunshine of peace. My first wish is to see the blessings of it diffused through all Countries, and among *all* ranks in every Country; and that we should consider ourselves as the children of a common parent, and be disposed to acts of brotherly kindness towards one another. In that case all restrictions of trade would vanish; we should take your Wines, your fruits and surplusage of other articles: and give you in return our oils, our Fish, Tobacco, naval stores &ca.;

Library of Congress

and in like manner we should exchange produce with other Countries, to our reciprocal advantage: the Globe is large enough, why then need we wrangle for a small spot of it? If one Country cannot contain us

another should open its arms to us. But these halcyon days (if they ever did exist) are now no more; a wise providence, I presume, has ordered it otherwise, and we must go on in the old way disputing, and now and then fighting, until the Globe itself is dissolved.

I rarely go from home; but my friends in and out of Congress sometimes tell me what is on the carpet; to hand it to you afterwards would be a circuitous mode, and altogether idle, as I am persuaded you have correspondents at New York who give it to you at first hand, and can relate it with more clearness and perspicuity than I can. I give the chief of my time to rural amusements; but I have lately been active in instituting a plan which, if success attends it and of which I have no doubt, may be productive of great political as well as commercial advantages to the States on the Atlantic, especially the middle ones; it is the extending and improving the inland navigations of the rivers Potomac and James, and communicating them with the Western waters by the shortest and easiest portages and good roads. Acts have passed the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland authorising private Adventurers to undertake the work; Companies in consequence have been incorporated; and that on this river is begun, but when we come to the difficult parts of it we shall require an Engineer of skill and practical knowledge in this branch of business; and from that Country where these kind of improvements have been conducted with the greatest success. With every great esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.³⁶

36. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE

Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: I am indebted to you for your several favors of the 20th. of Decr. introductory of Mr. de Chateaufort, 33 of the 15th. of Feby. and 25th. of March, which I should not have suffered to have remained so long unacknowledged, if anything had occurred, the relation of which could have compensated for the trouble of reading my letter.

Long as I have waited for such an event, nothing has yet happen'd of much importance in our political movements, and the Assemblies of the different States being now in their recesses, nothing probably will occur 'till they have met. In the meanwhile the mercantile interest *feeling* the necessity of giving a controuling power to Congress to regulate the trade of this Country, have prepared, and are now preparing Addresses to their respective Assemblies for this purpose. They are now clearly convinced that this power cannot be exercised with propriety unless one system pervades the whole Union, and is made competent to the ends. It has happened in this instance as in the revolution itself, that the means which G: B. pursues to obtain advantages, defeat her own ends; for I am certain, that if she had forborne to tax our trade with those restrictions and, imposts, which are laid on it by Acts of Parliament, or orders of the King in Council, that half a century would not have produced those powers in Congress, which, or more than probably will be given to them in a few months, and by which equal restrictions and duties may be laid; and

33. French consul for South Carolina.

in the interim, sorry I am to add, she would have monopolized in a very great degree, the commerce of the United States.

At length Congress have adopted a mode for disposing of the western Lands; but I confess it does not strike me as a very eligible one: however mine is only an opinion, and I wish to be mistaken in it, as the fund wou'd be very productive and afford great relief to the public creditors if the Lands meet with a ready sale.

Library of Congress

Treaty has been holden with the Western Indians at Fort McIntosh on the Ohio, (twenty-five miles below Pittsburgh) and advantageous terms entered into with those who met, for they ceded without any compensation as large a District, Northwest of that river as we have any occasion for at present: but it should seem that others of their respective Tribes are dissatisfied, and keep the settlers of the Western Territory in a state of disquietude. This I am persuaded will be the case whilst the British retain the Posts within the American lines, and when they will be surrendered, is not for me to decide.

Congress have had also under contemplation a Mint for the coinage of Gold, Silver and Copper; a committee has reported in favor of the measure, but I believe no ultimate decision is yet come to on the subject, by that Honl. Body.

From the last European accounts we have reason to hope that the clouds which seemed to be gathering in your hemisphere, will yield to a tranquil sky; and Peace, with all its blessings will spread its mantle over the threatened Lands. My first wish is to see the sons and Daughters of the World mixing as one family, enjoying the sweets of social intercourse, and reciprocal advantages: the Earth certainly is sufficient to contain us all, and affords every thing necessary to our wants, if we would be friendly and endeavour to accommodate one another. Why then

should we wrangle, and why should we attempt to infringe the Rights and properties of our Neighbours? But lest you shou'd suppose that I am about to turn preacher, I will only add that, with the highest esteem and consideration, I have the honor, etc.

P.S. I had not the pleasure of seeing Mr. de Chateaufort: upon the receipt of your letter of the 20th. of December, enclosed to me by that Gentleman from Philada.; I wrote to him praying that I might be honored with his company on his way to Carolina; but he found it more convenient at that hot season to go thither by Sea in the Packett.³⁴

34. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

On September 5 Washington also wrote a brief acknowledgment to Baron Vioménil for his introductory letter to De Chateaufort. A copy of this is in the "Letter Book."

To SAMUEL FRAUNCES

Mount Vernon, September 7, 1785.

Sir: As no person can judge better, of the qualifications necessary to constitute a good Housekeeper, or Household steward. than yourself, for a family which has a good deal of company and wishes to entertain them in a plain, but genteel style; I take the liberty of asking you if there is any such an one within your reach, whom you think could be induced to come to me on reasonable wages. I would rather have a man than a woman, but either will do, if they can be recommended for their honesty, sobriety, and knowledge of their profession; which in one word, is to relieve Mrs. Washington from the drudgery of ordering and seeing the Table properly covered, and things œconomically used: nothing more therefore need be said to inform you of a character that would suit me, than what is already mentioned.

The wages I now give to a man who is about to leave me in order to get married (under which circumstances he would not suit me) is about one hundred Dollars pt. annum; but for one who understands the business perfectly, and stands fore in all other respects, I would go as far as one hundred and twenty five dollars. Sometime ago I wrote to Colo. Biddle, and to Mr. Moyston (who keeps the City Tavern in Philada.) to try if they could procure me such a person as I want; I therefore beg, if you know of one that would suit me, and is to be had upon the terms above, and who can attend properly to a large family (for mine is such, with a good many workmen), that you would immediately inform Colo. Biddle of it before any engagement is entered into by you on my behalf, lest one should be provided at Philada. and embarrassments arise from the different engagements. I am sorry to give you so much trouble, but I hope you will excuse it in, Sir Yr. etc.³⁹

Library of Congress

39. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*

***To CLEMENT BIDDLE**

Mount Vernon, September 7, 1785.

Dear Sir: The man who at present lives with me in the capacity of a Housekeeper, or Household Steward, will leave me in a day or two; which (until his place can be supplied) will throw a great additional weight on Mrs. Washington. I therefore beg, if you, or Mr. Moyston,³⁸ should have met with a person whom you think would answer my purposes (as described in my former letters) that you would engage him, or her absolutely instead of conditionally, and send him (or her) absolutely, instead of conditionally, and send him on by the Stage. In the meanwhile, if one should offer to my liking here, my engagement shall be conditional. No disappointment. therefore can happen to the person engaged by you.

Inclosed is a letter to Mr. Frauncis (als. black Sam) late of New York, now of some place in the Jerseys. I leave it open for your perusal, to be forwarded, or destroyed, as circumstances may require. If you should have succeeded at Philadelphia, or are in the way of doing so, the latter will take place; if not, the sooner it can be got to his hands, the better. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are offered to Mrs. Biddle. I am etc.

[H.S.P.]

38. Edward Moyston.

***To COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU**

Mount Vernon, September 7, 1785.

My dear Count: Since I had the honor to address you last, I have been favored with your letters of the 9th. of Septr. and 24th. of Feby. The first enclosing a list of the New

Library of Congress

promotions, and additional members of the Society of the Cincinnati as consented by the King; for which I thank you, as it will enable me to give answers to those Gentlemen who, unacquainted I presume, with his Majesty's pleasure, are still offering to me their pretensions to be admitted into this Order.

Every occasion that assures me of your health, encreases my happiness, as I have a sincere respect, and an affectionate regard for you. My time now, as the Marquis de la Fayette has informed you, is spent in rural employments, and in contemplation of those friendships which the revolution enabled me to form with so many worthy characters of your Nation, through whose assistance I can now sit down in my calm retreat; and under my own Vine, and my own fig tree, enjoy those pleasures which are rarely to be found in the more active pursuits of life, on a larger theatre.

I hope the storms which rumbled about you all the Winter, and wch. seemed to portend so much mischief, are dispersed; and that a tranquil sky has succeeded. Although it is against the profession of Arms, I wish to see all the World in Peace. How long this blessing may be dispensed to us, I know not, the British still hold the Posts upon the Lakes, within the Territory of the United States; and discover no inclination (that has come to my knowledge) of giving them up. With respect to the Spaniards, I do not think the Navigation of the Mississippi is an object of great importance at present, when it becomes so, when the

Banks of the Ohio are thick settled, and when the fertile plains of that Western Country are covered with people they will not be deprived of natural advantages.

I am very thankful for the polite attentions of Madame de Rochambeau, to whom I pray you to present my best respects, and to any of our worthy compatriots in the late War. Mrs. Washington, sensible of your kind remembrance of her, begs you to accept her Compliments. With sincere friendship and perfect attachment I am etc.

Library of Congress

I take the liberty of putting the enclosed letter under your cover as it contains original papers wch. might be a loss to Captn. de Pusignan.³⁷

To JOHN DE NEUFVILLE

Mount Vernon, September 8, 1785.

Sir: I have lately been honored with your favors of the 10th and 15th of March. Until the latter explained the mistake of the former, I was puzzled to get at the meaning of it; because, I did not recollect that I had ever made application to your Son for the loan of any money; but since the subject has been started, I will take the liberty of pursuing it.

I am a member of a Company in this State, who associated many years ago for the purpose of reclaiming what is called the Great Dismal Swamp near Norfolk. The war gave considerable interruption, indeed almost put an entire stop to the progress of the business; but in May last the members (for the first time since the war) had a meeting, and resolved

37. From the original in the *Rochambeau Papers*.

to prosecute the work with vigor: for this purpose they are inclined to borrow money on interest; and to import, if they can do it upon advantageous terms, a number of Hollanders, or Germans, as being best acquainted with the nature of the work; which is to drain and bank level, low and wet land, which would from its situation, and the quality of its soil, be invaluable if accomplished.

Individually, the members possess considerable property, as a company they have little money at command; but would I believe, bind themselves jointly and severally for the repayment of the principal sum borrowed, in a given number of years; and for such interest as may be agreed upon annually: and as a collateral security they would moreover, I imagine, mortgage the Estate which they are about to improve.

Library of Congress

Under this Statement of the matter, permit me to ask you frankly, if four or five thousand pounds could be borrowed in Amsterdam; at what interest and for how long a term? and whether it is a matter which could be easily accomplished, to import about three hundred laborers (a few women among them would be no objection), for what time they might be engaged and upon what wages? and what expence would attend the importation?

Since my last to you I have had the pleasure of your son's company at this place; he appeared at the time to be in good health, and I hope has been able to put your business in this Country on a more favourable footing, than your letter of the 15th. of June last year indicated; in a word, I hope it is placed on as good a footing as the nature of the case will admit. I have the honor, etc.⁴⁰

40. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, September 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: The enclosed was put into my hands yesterday; and I take the liberty of forwarding it by the post today, hoping if no person is appointed in the place of Mr. Massey, that your Excellency for the reason assigned by the Maryland Commrs. and on account of the advanced season, will cause it to be done as soon as convenient.⁴¹ With very great esteem and respect, I have the honor, etc.⁴⁰

To THOMAS JOHNSON AND THOMAS SIM LEE

Mount Vernon, September 10, 1785.

Gentn: Your favor of the 30th. ulto. did not reach me until the 8th. instant; I went the next day to Alexandria and laid it before Colos. Fitzgerald and Gilpin, who with himself, acceded fully to the propriety of your proposal of buying servants. Of this, the Secretary

Library of Congress

was directed to inform you; also of our sentiments respecting the hire of negroes by the year, and to ask your opinion of the number necessary, and of the terms on which to employ them.

Colo. Gilpin has lately seen Mr. Stuart, who informed him that fifty hands were then employed at Seneca, and in his opinion going on very well until the waters were swelled by the late rains. He and I (if I am not prevented by company which I have some reason to expect about that time) intend to be at Seneca on Wednesday the 21st., and at the Great Falls at Eight oclock next morning; where we are to meet

41. Henry answered (September 26): "Your Favor covering Mr. Deakins's Letter I received this Morning. As soon as Mr. Massey's Resignation was handed to me, the Appointment of Mr. Neville was made and sent out to him with a Copy of the Resolution of Assembly." Henry's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

40. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Colo. Fitzgerald for the purpose of viewing for our private satisfaction, the place talked of for the Canal; and the water between the Great and little falls. Mr. Stuart informed Colo. Gilpin that he had never seen the Butcher from Fredk. town; nor had he received an ounce of provisions from him.

I am sorry to receive so unfavourable a report from Shenandoah as your letter contains; I hope it will mend, or the cause must be removed. If the health of Mr. Johnson, and the circumstances of Mr. Lee would permit them to visit that place now and then; it would, I am persuaded, have a happy effect: the eye of a Director will be of service to the Conductors. With very great esteem and regard, I am, etc.⁴²

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, September 10, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: My last letter to you was so full, that I should not have troubled you again at this early period, but to observe as I did before, that upon reading the Proclamation which I then enclosed (and which I had scarce time to run over before it was dispatched), it appeared to me that as it forbid in general terms, the settlement of Lands upon the western waters, it might be necessary for me to adduce the subsequent Act of the King's Governor; by which the military rights under that Proclamation were recognized, and exempted from the restriction thereof. Accordingly, I wrote to our Attorney General Mr. Randolph, for a certified copy thereof; under which the warrants for surveying these claims were directed to be issued; but in some measure he misconceived my request. However, his

42. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

answer and reasoning applies with as much force to the order of Council, as it does to the instruction which gave rise to it; I therefore send his letters with a Certificate of the Governor and the seal of the Commonwealth to give validity to the Acts wch. have been already forwarded to you from the Registers office under the direction of Mr. Harvie.

My title to the Land in dispute, in my own judgment, is so clear, that I can scarce conceive what my opponents will urge, that can have the least weight with an impartial Count and Jury; but as I apprehend there will be some management in obtaining the latter, it may not be amiss to apprise you, that from my best information (and a gentleman on whom I can depend, told me that he had it from Mr. Prothonotary Scott, brother to my principal opponent) a majority of the occupants settled on the Land after my Patent had actually issued, and consequently in his opinion, could not have the shadow of a claim. Putting my military right then, and all the steps which were taken in consequence of it, out of the question; my improvement (admitting there never was more than one) which stands on the Land to this day, and which was acknowledged by themselves to be there when the Defendants first came to it, will entitle me, for settlement and pre-emption rights, to 1400 acres under our Laws, as you may perceive by the authentic documents already sent you: and these 1400 acres, without the aid of an irregular form and unnatural extension,

Library of Congress

would comprehend James Scott's farm, and I presume all those which were seated before I obtained my Patent. It appears to me therefore that in one way

or other, they must be overthrown.

It has been reported to me (and as *report* only I give it) that the Defendants are preparing to remove off. Whether, if true, the measure proceeds from a conviction of the futility of their claim, or that they mean to be prepared against the worst, or, as it was said whilst I was out, their only design was to gain time, I shall not decide: but be it as it may, as they have withheld the Land from me ten or twelve years after all the admonition I could give, and the favorable offers which have been made them, and finally have put me to the expence and trouble of bringing and supporting Ejectments, it is my wish and desire, whether they leave the land voluntarily, or are compelled to do so by a course of Law, that you will sue them respectively for Trespasses, rents or otherwise as you shall judge best and most proper to obtain justice for me. I should be glad to hear that this and my former letter had got safe to hand. I am, etc.⁴³

To WILLIAM HARTSHORNE

Mount Vernon, September 14, 1785.

Sir: Colo. Wm. Fitzhugh of Maryland has this day requested me, to enter his name for one share of the Potomac navigation; of which I give you this information: he has also deposited in my hands ten pounds for the first and second advances thereon; which I will pay you when I come next to town, or to your order at any time.

I should take it very kind of you to forward the enclosed letter by the first safe

43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

consequence; it contains a summons of some consequence to me, I am, etc.⁴³

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, September 14, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Rawlins brought me your favor of the 31st. ulto., and I thank you for sending him; he is to furnish me a design for my room, and an estimate of the cost; after which I shall be better able to make an estimate of his conscience. When Mr. ODonnal⁴⁴ has determin'd on his plan, I shall expect to hear from you.

Enclosed is the packet mentioned in my last, for Mr. Smith of Carlisle which I pray you to send by a *safe* rather than the first opportunity which may offer to that place.

With great truth I am, etc.

P.S. Since writing the above, Mr. Fitzhugh of your State has informed Mrs. Washington that there is, or was very fine and pretty Dimmity Muslin selling on board the Indian Ship at half a dollar pr. yard: if this is now the case, she desires me to tell you that she would be much obliged to you for getting her two or three pieces.⁴⁵

43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

44. O'Donnell.

45. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, September 16, 1785.

Dear Sir: It was not in my power to obtain the enclosed in time, to forward them by the last mail; but they will, I hope, reach you seasonably for your intended meeting on the 26th, by the present mail.

Library of Congress

I feel very sensibly, the honor and confidence which has been reposed in me by the James river company; and regret that it will not be in my power to discharge the duties of the office of President of the Board of Directors, with that punctuality and attention which the trust requires. Every service however that I can render, compatible with my other avocations, shall be afforded with pleasure, and I am happy in being associated in the business with Gentlemen so competent to the purposes of their appointment, and from what I have heard of the navigation, and seen of the Falls, I think your work may be soon and easily accomplished, and that it will be of great public utility, as well as private emolument to the subscribers when done: for the advantage of both, tho' I believe the business lies in another line, I would earnestly recommend it to you to press the execution of the survey between James river and the navigable waters of the Kanhawa, and a proper investigation of the latter. It will be a source of great commerce with the capitol and in my opinion will be productive of great political consequences to this country: the business of a similar nature, as it respects this river, is at an entire stand. Mr. Massey who was first appointed on the part of this State, having declined acting; the Maryland Commissioner knows of no other in his room, and is unable, tho' ready to proceed.

Besides what appears in the minutes, which are enclosed, it is in contemplation by the Board of Directors of the Navigation of this river, to endeavor to hire a number of Slaves next year as laborers therein, and as the Great Falls are

tremendous, and the navigation thereof, in whatever manner it is attempted, will require much skill and practical knowledge in the execution; we propose, before this is undertaken, to invite a proper person from Europe, who has been employed in works of this kind, as a superintendant of it: With respect to the other parts of the river, tho' what are called the Shanandoah Falls are as difficult in my opinion as the Falls of James river, at Westham, we seem to have confidence enough in ourselves to undertake them; and mean to do so without having recourse to either canals or Locks. Thro' all the Falls and rapids *above the Great falls*, we mean to attempt nothing more than to open a strait passage to

Library of Congress

avoid, as much as possible, currents; giving sufficient depth, and as much smoothness as may be to the surface; and if Rumsey's project fails (of which he has not the smallest apprehension) to pull the Boats up by chains floated by buoys: the latter, when Ice begins to form, may be slipped and thereby saved; whilst the former rivoted to rocks at bottom, may remain during the intemperate season undisturbed and without injury.

Upon an estimate of the expence of those chains and Buoys, we (that is, the Directors of the Potomac navigation and myself) are of the opinion, without having an eye to the probable advantages which are expected to be derived from Rumsey's mechanical discovery, that it will be infinitely less than what must arise from cutting canals, building Locks, making track paths, &c., as was the design of Ballendine and others; and will have this advantage over them, that when once done, that is when the passage is opened in a straight direction in the natural bed of the river,

it is done as it were forever, whereas canals and Locks, besides the natural decay of them, are exposed to much injury from Ice, drift-wood, and even the common freshes; in a word, are never safe where there are such sudden inundations and violent torrents, as the rivers in this country are subject to.

It has so happened that Thursday the 22d inst. is a day of my own appointing to meet the Directors at the Great Falls of this river, for the purpose of examining the place proposed for a canal; and the river and ground from thence to tide water, on which business I expect to be employed (at least to be from home) four or five days.

Altho' I see no impropriety myself in laying the Proceedings of the Potomac Company before the Board of Directors of the James river navigation, it being my wish that every intelligence which one can give to the other should be mutually afforded; yet it is my desire that the act may be considered as transmitted for the private information (if it shou'd convey any light) of yourself and the Directors.

Library of Congress

We are endeavoring to engage our miners to bore by the foot; rather than by the day; but as yet have not agreed with any in this way: they ask a shilling, which we think is too much to common labourers we pay 40/per month; and we find paying the workmen every fortnight, rather troublesome once a month would do better: as they will be frequently moving, we have provided Tents as most convenient and least expensive, for their accommodation.

I find I have been under a mistake with respect to the subscriptions for the James river navigation; I conceived the Books were to lie open 'till the general meeting appointed (as that for this river was) by law; and if the aggregate amounted to more than the sum required by the act, at such meeting they were then to be reduced in the manner therein directed.

The expression of the Law, "the highest point practicable," is certainly too indefinite; and in the hurry which the act passed, the import of it was not sufficiently adverted to: but how far it may be politic for the Potomac Company to meddle in the matter, I will not at this moment undertake to decide; as the concurrence of *two* States is required to effect the Alteration, and as one of them, it is said by those who are unfriendly to the measure, has been surprized into it.

If it would not be too troublesome for your Secretary, it would be a satisfaction to me to receive a copy of your proceedings, With great esteem and sincere friendship, I am, &c.46

***To BATTAILE MUSE**

Mount Vernon, September 18, 1785.

Sir: I have received two or three letters from you of late. The Seed which was sent to the care of Mr. Hartshorne I have got, and am obliged by the dispatch with which you have sent it.

Library of Congress

The great inattention to my Tenants during the nine years that I was absent, and the traffick which they made of my Land (expressly contrary to the Tenor of my Leases) renders it next to impossible for me without being upon the Land, and obtaining oral information, to make out the Accts. or discover in whose possession the Lotts now are precisely. The best sketch I can give, is herewith enclosed; but I do not suppose to be accurate.

The Man from whom you could

46. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

have obtained the best information respecting the Tenants, their arrearages of Rent, Transferances, &ca. on that Tract of Land which I hold in Ashby's bend (partly in Fauquier and partly in Loudoun Counties) was one Lewis Lamart, but he died last Spring, after having Collected some of the Rents for me; to whom to advise you in the next place, I am at a loss; Captn. Robert Ashby has a pretty good knowledge of some matters, but either he or one of his Son's, stands I believe among the list of delinquents, which may render his information dubious where his knowledge is most perfect.

Besides the Lotts and Tenants mentioned in the list enclosed, there are, or ought to be, several more of the latter on a Tract I have on Chattins run of Goose Creek, adjoining Captn. Robert Ashby; among whom, I presume the Rectors are. But with respect to this Land, I can give less information than on any other. Whether any Leases have ever been given, or not, I am unable to say. What follows, is taken from a Memorandum which I found tied up in the bundle of Leases.

Memm. March 16th. 1774.

Agreed with one — Thompson for the Land at the upper end of my Chattins run Tract; That is to give him a lease for it at the rate of £5 pr. hundd. Acres. He is to have all the Land So. Wt. of the branch which runs through the Tract, unless there should be enough

Library of Congress

for two lotts; in which case he is to have but one Lott. Rent to be pd. the 25th Decr. 1777. Also agreed to let Edwd. Grymes have the Lott he lives on, extending towards Chattins run and Ashbys Mill path for quantity. He also is to have a lease, and to pay at the rate of £5 pr. hundd. acres next Christmas.

Also agreed to Lease Enoch Ashby 150, or 200 acs. upon the back line, and middle run; he paying at the rate of £5 pr. hundd. to commence the 25th. Decr. 1777.

Also was spoke to for the Lott adjoining this

and Edwd. Grymes's, by Robt. Ashby for one Richard Watts upon the same terms.

The foregoing was taken upon the Land at the time I was there for the purpose of renting it, but what has happened since, as I have observed to you before, I am unable to inform you. I am willing to preserve good faith with every Tenant; and am ready to fulfil all my engagements with them, not only such as are legal and just, but those that are honorable, nay more, such as have no other claim but upon my generosity, where there shall appear a proper conduct on their part. But where you shall find they have taken advantage of me by paying paper money when Six pence on a Shilling would pay a pound, where they have paid little or no Rents at all, and their sole aim seems to have been to make a prey of me, by bartering and selling my Land, solely for their own emolument, I should have no scruple in any of those cases, or any other, which shall appear unjustifiable, to take advantage of the Covenants in the Leases where they have been given; and to refuse them when they have not, set them aside, and Re-Rent the Land to the highest bidder, and best possible advantage to my Interest.

Enclosed I send you a short power, which may do for the present; and when you come down in October it may be enlarged, and some further light perhaps, thrown on this business. You will observe that the list inclosed does not include the Rents of the present

Library of Congress

year. Except in cases where the Tenants are about to remove, and the rents thereby or by other means are endangered; I would wish to avoid making distress

until you have more precise information, and have had an interview with me in October; for besides the Ballances which appear to be due by the inclosed list, many of my Leases require an Alienation Rent for every transference; which, at present, I have not time to look into; but will prepare by October; at which time I will put the Leases into your hands. In the meanwhile, it would be well for you to examine each Tenant, that I may know by what authority he came on the Tenement, how far he has complied with the Covenants of the Lease, what Transferences have taken place, and what Rents (by their receipts, or authentic proofs which no doubt every one of them can shew) has been paid. By doing this some line of conduct may be adopted which will avoid evil and bad consequences either to the tenant or myself. I am etc.

PS. If you could transmit, previously to your coming down, an account of the information you get, on the above points, the accts. may be prepared against you arrive here in Octooer.⁴⁷

To LEVI HOLLINGSWORTH

Mount Vernon, September 20, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th. ulto. did not get to my hands until the 17th. inst: and then came by the Post, for Mr. Jackson is an inhabitant of Red Stone, 250 miles distant from me. I am obliged to him however for having taken notice of a wish of mine which was accidentally expressed before him, more so to you for having facilitated it, and particularly so to Mr. Donaldson for obliging offering to carry it into effect.

I have long been convinced, that the bed of the Potomac before my door, contains an inexhaustable fund of manure; and if I could adopt an easy, simple and expeditious

Library of Congress

47. From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by William Randolph Hearst, of New York City.

method of raising, and taking it to the land, that it might be converted to useful purposes. Mr. Donaldson's Hippopotamos⁴⁹ goes beyond anything I had conceiv'd with respect to the first; but whether the manner of its working would answer my purpose or not is the question; by his using a horse, I fear it will not, as I shall have to go from one hundred to eight hundred or a thousand yards, from high water mark for the mud; tho' I believe any quantity may be had at the lesser distance; the depth of water at the greater will not exceed eight feet, and not much swell unless the wind is turbulent.

Under this information, it would give me great satisfaction to have Mr. Donaldson's opinion of the utility of his Hippopotamos for my purposes; as Mud which is many feet deep, and soft, is to be raised at a distance from, and to be brought to the shore when the tide is up, in vessels which draw but little water. And he would add to the favor (if the machine is applicable to my wants) by informing me what kind of a vessel is necessary for its operation; what would be the cost of this vessel, and of the machine I should have to use on it; whether by a model the whole could be constructed by ingenious workmen here; or whether it must be done under his own eye, and in the latter case, what would be the additional expence of getting them from Philadelphia to this place.

The kind offer of Mr. Donaldson, for which I pray you to return him my sincere thanks, of furnishing me with a model, or other information; and your obliging communication thereof has drawn upon you both this trouble; instead

49. Noted in Arthur Donaldson's letter to Washington, Oct. 1, 1785, with an engraving of the "Hippopotamos" and an explanation, clipped from *The Pennsylvania Magazine*, which are in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

therefore of apologizing for giving it, I will assure you that I have a grateful sense of the kindness of you both and am his and your Most Obt. &ca.50

To THOMAS FREEMAN

September 22, 1785.

Sir: If Mr. Jonathan Johnson will give one hundred Dollars per ann: for my tract at the Great Meadows, he may have a Lease therefor, for the term of ten years without any other conditions annexed than those of reclaiming the Meadow and putting the whole under a good fence; leaving it to himself to place such buildings on the *premises* as his own inclination may prompt him to. Or, if he will build a dwelling House 36 feet by 24, with three rooms below and four above, with two stone chimneys, and fire places in each room, the House to be of hewed Logs or framed work, with glass windows. A Kitchen 16 by 20 feet, of the same kind of work with one stone chimney; and a Stable sufficient to contain twelve horses conveniently, I will allow him two years of the ten, exempt from rent. I am, etc.51

50. This text is a combination of that found in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers* and one printed in a sales catalogue of 1891, the catalogue being followed where it is, obviously, closer to Washington's original.

51. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To CAPTAIN DE GENEVY DE PUSIGNAN52

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: It is not fourteen days since I was honored with your letter of the 16th. of last Octr. to what cause the delay is to be ascribed I am unable to inform you; but lest this answer with the inclosure should meet with any accident, I dispatch it under cover to the Count de Rochambeau at Paris.

Library of Congress

I am sorry Sir, it is not in my power to comply with your wishes in regard to the Order of the Cincinnati. The institution itself points out the different grades of Officers who are to be admitted into this Society; and at its last General Meeting, the members thereof in France, of which the Counts de Rochambeau and de Estaing were placed at the head; one in the Military, the other in the Naval Line, were empowered to hold meetings and to decide upon the Claims of Officers belonging to either department in that Country.

It is there Sir, your pretensions must be offered; and if they are not precluded by the determination of your Sovereign, will I doubt not, meet with the liberal and favourable interpretation to which your merit entitled you. I have the honor to be, etc.⁵¹

52. Capt. Alexandre Cesar de Genevy de Pusignan. He had been lieutenant en second, Regiment D'Auxonne, French allied troops.

51. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To OTHO HOLLAND WILLIAMS**

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 15th. of Augt. from Bath, only got to my hands on Sunday last. The one alluded to, of April, as giving an acct. of the miscarriage of the Diplomas,⁵⁷ and the best information you could obtain respecting them, nor any other since that which accompanied the Parchments, and wch. received an immediate acknowledgement, have reached me at all.

In a word, I never had the least intimation, or knowledge of the accident until Major Jacksons⁵⁸ Letter (copy of which I sent you) was delivered to me.

I have since enquired of Colo. Fitzgerald if he could recollect in whose care they were placed; his memory he says does not serve him on this occasion, but he is sure they

Library of Congress

were entrusted to safe hands, or such as appeared to him at the time to be so. It is a little extraordinary therefore that this person, whoever he may be, should not have given notice of the loss either to him, from whom the parcel was received, or to you to whom it was intended.

It is to be feared, under these circumstances, that neither the Diploma's, or the money advanced for them, will ever be recovered. however, if you conceive that an Advertisement will effect any valuable purpose, or be satisfactory to the Gentlemen for whose benefit they were designed, you can, as Secretary, recite the event and request information from any who may have it in their power to give it. With great esteem etc.

[H.S.P.]

57. Of the Cincinnati.

58. William Jackson.

To J. L. LE BARBIER, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: I have been honored with the receipt of your letter dated at Paris the 4th. of March; and pray you to accept my thanks for those copies of your Dramatic performance⁵³ which you had the goodness to send me, and in which you have made such honorable and flattering mention of my name.

I lament Sir, that my merits are not equal to your praises, and regret exceedingly that my deficiency in the knowledge of the French language does not allow me to become master of the Drama, and of those sentiments which I am told are beautifully expressed in it by the author. Upon my gratitude you have a large claim for those expressions of

Library of Congress

esteem with which your letter is replete, and which, from a Gentleman who professes not to compliment, are the more to be valued. I have the honor, etc.⁵⁴

To BARBÉ MARBOIS

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 14th. from New York. At the moment I congratulate you on your late appointment,⁵⁵ and this fresh instance of his most Christian Majesty's attention to your merits, I cannot but express my sorrow that you are so near the eve of your departure from America.

I shall remember with pleasure Sir, the friendship you have always expressed for me; and with gratitude shall recollect the many instances

53. See Washington's letter to the President of Congress, Aug. 22, 1785, *ante*.

54. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

55. Intendant for Hispaniola.

of your partiality and attention towards me. I should receive with great satisfaction the accot. of your safe arrival at Hispaniola and of every other event which can be interesting and pleasing to you; being with much truth, and great esteem and regard Sir Yr. etc.⁵⁶

To VICOMTE D'ARROT⁵⁹

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: Your kind remembrance of me in a letter of the 15th. of July from the Island of Tobago, does me much honor; at the sametime that the knowledge of your appointment as Governor of that place, and your good health, gave me much pleasure. I pray you to be assured that nothing which comes from Colo. D'Arrot can

Library of Congress

be considered as a trouble, and that to hear, at his moments of leisure, that you are in the enjoyment of perfect health, and the smiles of your Sovereign will always be pleasing; as I recollect with gratitude those instances of Mention with which you have honored me, and the circumstances that brought us acquainted.

In the enjoyment of ease and tranquillity, which your sword has contributed to procure, I am now seated under my own Vine and my own Fig-tree in the occupations of rural life, at the Seat which you once honored with

56. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

59. Rene Marie, Vicomte D'Arrot, Major General and Governor of the Island of Tobago.

your presence, and where I should be happy to meet you again.

At present we have no news that could afford you any entertainment: these States are in the full enjoyment of peace, and nothing, it is to be hoped will disturb the quiet of them. Tho' there is something misterious and not easy to reconcile with the spirit of the treaty, in the British still continuing their Garrisons at the posts of Niagara, Detroit &c. which are on the American side of the territorial line, notwithstanding a demand has been made of them.

Mrs. Washington, who remembers with pleasure your calling here with some Officers of your Legion, thanks you for your attention, and prays you to accept her compliments. With sentiments of great esteem etc.⁶⁰

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: Amid the public gratulations on your safe return to America, after a long absence and the many eminent services you have rendered it, for which as a benefited person I feel the obligation, permit an individual to join the public voice in expressing a sense of them;

Library of Congress

and to assure you, that, as no one entertains more respect for your character, so none can salute you with more sincerity, or with greater pleasure, than I do on the occasion. With the highest regard and greatest consideration, I am, &c.⁵⁴

60. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

54. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Dear Sir: I had just written, and was about to put into the hands of Mr. Taylor⁶⁶ (a gentleman in the department of the secretary of foreign affairs) the enclosed letter, when I had the honor to receive by post your favor of the 20th instant. I have a grateful sense of the partiality of the French nation towards me, and feel very sensibly the indulgent expression of your letter, which does me great honor.

When it suits M. Houdon to come hither, I will accommodate him in the best manner I am able, and shall endeavour to render his stay as agreeable as I can. It would give me infinite pleasure to see you. At this place I dare not look for it; though to entertain you under my own roof would be doubly gratifying. When or whether I shall ever have the satisfaction of seeing you at Philadelphia is uncertain, as retirement from the public walks of life has not been so productive of leisure and ease as might have been expected. With very great esteem, etc.⁶⁵

66. George Taylor.

65. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JEAN ANTOINE HOUDON

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Sir: By a letter⁶¹ which I have lately had the honor to receive from Dr. Franklin at Philada., I am informed of your arrival at that place; many letters from very respectable characters in France, as well as the Doctors, inform me of the occasion, for which, tho' the cause is not of my seeking, I feel the most agreeable and grateful sensations. I wish the object of your mission had been more worthy of the masterly strokes of the first Statuary in Europe; for thus you are represented to me.

It will give me pleasure Sir, to welcome you to this seat of my retirement: and whatever I have, or can procure that is necessary to your purposes, or convenient and agreeable to your wishes; you must freely command, as inclination to oblige you, shall be not found deficient, either on your arrival, or during your stay.

With sentiments of esteem, etc.⁶²

61. On September 26 Washington wrote briefly to William Temple Franklin, acknowledging his letter of Sept. 20, 1785. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

62. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THOMAS JEFFERSON**

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 10th. and 17th. of July which were committed to the care of Mr. Houdon; but I have not yet had the pleasure to see that Gentleman. His Instruments and materials (Doctr Franklin informs me) not being arrived at Havre when they Sailed he was obliged to leave them; and is now employed in providing others at Philadelphia, with which he will proceed to this place as soon as they

Library of Congress

are ready. I shall take great pleasure in shewing Mr. Houdon every civility, and attention in my power during his stay in this Country, as I feel myself under personal obligations to you and Doctr. Franklin (as the State of Virginia have done me the honor to direct a Statue to be erected to my Memory) for havg. entrusted the execution of it to so eminent an Artist, and so worthy a character. I have the pleasure to inform you, that the subscriptions to the inland Navigations of the Rivers Potomack and James require no aid from Foreigners.

the product of the first when the Books were exhibited at the General Meeting in May last, amounted to £40,300. Sterling, and is since nearly compleated to the full Sum required bylaw. That of the latter, at the General Meeting in August, were superabundant. The work of the former began the first of August, and is progressing very well, the latter I am persuaded will do *more* than keep pace with it, as the difficulties are much less.

I have the further pleasure to inform you (and I should have done it long since, had I not supposed that your information would have been more full and p effect from some of your friends in the Assembly) that a resolution authorizing the Executive to appoint Commissioners to explore, and report the best communication between the Waters of Elizabeth River and those of Albermarle passed last Session. That the Commrs. have proceeded to the Survey, and have reported in favor of that which will pass through Drummonds pond to the Pasquetank; but what will be the result I am unable to inform you, as I find by some of the principal characters of No. Carolina (Members of Congress) who have called here, that jealousies prevail, and a powerful opposition will be given to any Water Communication between the two States, lest Virginia should derive the benefits arising from their Exports &ca.

I am very happy to find that your sentiments respecting the interest the Assembly was pleased to give me in the two navigations of the Potomack and James Rivers, coincide so well with my own. I never, for a moment, entertained an idea of accepting; the difficulty which laboured in my mind was how to refuse without giving offence. Ultimately I have it

Library of Congress

in contemplation to apply the profits arising from the Tolls to some public use. In this, if I knew how, I would meet

the wishes of the Assembly; but if I am not able to get at these, my own inclination leads me to apply them to the establishment of two charity Schools, one on each river, for the Education and support of poor Children; especially the descendants of those who have fallen in defence of their Country.

I can say nothing decisely [*sic*] respecting the Western Settlement of this State. The Inhabitants of Kentucke have held several Conventions, and have resolved to apply for a Seperation. But what may be the final issue of it, is not for me, at this time, to inform you. Opinions, as far as they have come to my knowledge, are diverse. I have uniformly given it as mine, to meet them upon their own ground, draw the best line, and best terms we can of seperation and part good friends. After the next Session of our Assembly more may be discovered, and communicated, and if you should not receive it through a better channel, I will have the honor to inform you.

I am sorry I cannot give you full information respecting Captn. Bushnals projects for the destruction of Shipping. No interesting experiment having been made, and my memory being treacherous, I may, in some measure, be mistaken in what I am about to relate. Bushnel is a man of great Mechanical powers, fertile of invention, and master in execution. He came to me in 1776 recommended by Governor Trumbull (now dead) and other respectable characters who were proselites to his plan. Although I wanted faith myself, I furnished him with money, and other aids to carry it into execution. He laboured for sometime ineffectu

ally, and though the advocates for his scheme continued sanguine he never did succeed. One accident or another always intervening. I then thought, and still think, that it was an effort of genius; but that a combination of too many things were requisite, to expect much success from the enterprise against an enemy, who are always upon guard.

Library of Congress

That he had a Machine so contrived as to carry a man under water at any depth he chose, and for a considerable time and distance, with an apparatus charged with Powder which he could fasten to a Ships bottom or side and give fire to in a given time (Sufft. for him to retire) by means whereof a ship could be blown up, or sunk, are facts which I believe admit of little doubt; but then, where it was to operate against an enemy, it is no easy matter to get a person hardy enough to encounter the variety of dangers to which he must be exposed. 1 from the novelty 2 from the difficulty of conducting the machine, and governing it under water on Acct. of the Currents &ca. 3 the consequent uncertainty of hitting the object of destination, without rising frequently above water for fresh observation, wch., when near the Vessel, would expose the Adventurer to a discovery, and to almost to certain death. To these causes I always ascribed the non-performance of his plan, as he wanted nothing that I could furnish, to secure the success of it. This to the best of my recollection is a true state of the case. But Humphreys, if I mistake not, being one of the proselites, will be able to give you a more perfect Acct. of it than I have done. With the most perfect esteem etc.⁶³

63. From the original in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To RICHARD VARICK

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Taylor⁶⁴ brought me your favor of the 28th. ulto., and I have received your other letter of the 2d. of December; for both I thank you, as also for the proceedings of the Mayors Court in the case of Rutgars and Waddington which was enclosed in the latter. I have read this with attention; and tho' I pretend not to be a competent judge of the Law of Nations, or of the act of your Assembly, nor of the spirit of the confederation in their niceties; yet it should seem to me that the interpretation of them by the Court, is founded in reason and common sense; which is, or ought to be the foundation of all Law and Government.

Library of Congress

I am sorry to hear of your long indisposition and repeated attacks; it may be well to nurse a little. Disorders oftentimes, are easier prevented than cured, and while you are in the way to re-establish your health, (on which I congratulate you) it is better to use preventatives, than alteratives &c. &c. with which the Apothecaries Shops are replete.

As you are at the source of foreign intelligence, I could only reverberate what you have before heard; and having nothing of a Domestic kind worth communicating, I shall be rather laconic in my perfect address. I enjoy, thank God, very good health, but Mrs. W—n, is scarce ever well, she joins me in best wishes for you, and I am, etc.⁶⁵

64. George Taylor, jr.

65. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mount Vernon, September 27, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Taylor presented me the honor of your favor of the 25th. ulto., and gave me the pleasure of hearing that Mrs. Jay, yourself and family were well when he left New York. Upon your safe return to your native Country, after the long absence, and important services you have rendered it in many interesting negotiations, I very sincerely congratulate you and your Lady. It gave me great pleasure to hear of your late appointment as Secretary of Foreign Affairs: a happier choice in my opinion, could not have been made; and I shall always rejoice at any circumstance which can contribute either to your honor, interest or convenience.

Having compleated his mission, Mr. Taylor returns to you with the proceedings, and report of the Commissioners who were sent into New York to inspect the embarkations; which by the by, was little more than a farce, as they inspected no more property than the British chose they should be witness to the embarkation of. It will always give me pleasure to hear

Library of Congress

from you. Mrs. Washington joins me in most respectful compliments to, and best wishes for yourself and Mrs. Jay, and I am, etc.⁶⁷

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To JONATHAN TRUMBULL**

Mount Vernon, October 1, 1785.

My dear Sir: It has so happened, that your letter of the first of last month did not reach me until Saturdays Post. You know, too well, the sincere respect and regard I entertained for your venerable fathers public and private character, to require assurances of the concern I felt for his death; or of that sympathy in your feelings for the loss of him, which is prompted by friendship. Under this loss however, great as your pangs may have been at the first shock, you have every thing to console you. A long and well spent life in the Service of his Country, placed Govt. Trumbull amongst the first of Patriots. In the social duties he yielded to none. and his Lamp, from the common course of Nature, being nearly extinguished, worn down with age and cares, but retaining his mental faculties in perfection, are blessings which rarely attend advanced life. All these combining, have secured to his memory universal respect and love here, and no doubt immeasurable happiness hereafter.

I am sensible that none of these observations can have escaped you, and that I can offer nothing which your own reason has not already suggested on this occasion; and being of Sterne's opinion, that "Before an affliction is digested, consolation comes too soon; and after it is digested, it comes too late: there is but a mark between these two, as fine almost as a hair, for a comforter to take aim at." I rarely attempt it, nor shall I add more on this subject to

you, as it would only be a renewal of sorrow, by recalling a fresh to your remembrance things which had better be forgotten.

Library of Congress

My principal pursuits are of a rural nature, in which I have great delight, especially as I am blessed with the enjoyment of good health. Mrs. Washington on the contrary is hardly ever well, but thankful for your kind remembrance of her, and joins me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Trumbull and your family. Be assured that with sentiments of the purest, esteem etc.⁶⁸

68. From a photostat of the original in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN PAGE

Mount Vernon, October 3, 1785.

My Dear Sir: The last Post from Richmd. gave me the pleasure of your favor of the 9th. from Rosewell. Expressions of friendship from good men, and the congratulations of those who are not addicted to unmeaning compliments, cannot fail to be acceptable. In this light I view and thank you for the obliging and indulgent sentiments of your letter, which have affected my mind with gratitude and pleasure.

It will be unnecessary I hope Sir, to assure you of the pleasure I shou'd have felt at seeing you and Mrs. Page at Mount Vernon on your way to Philada., if you could have made it convenient and agreeable to have taken this rout, at all times I should be happy to see you here.

Soon after I returned from Richmond in May last, I spoke to a Dutch Merchant in Alexandria on the subject of importing Germans; but not receiving any satisfactory information from him, tho' he was perfectly willing to oblige, I requested him, as he was on the eve of a journey thro' Baltimore to Boston, at both which Dutch Houses are established, and in the last he is concerned, to make every enquiry he could respecting the mode, the terms, and practicability of obtaining the number we want: but meeting with no precise information here neither, I wrote some little time ago to Mr. De Neufville, a Gentleman of very respectable character at Amsterdam, with whom I have long

Library of Congress

corresponded, for full information; and to know also, if ,£5000 could be borrowed for the use

of the Company on such terms, and upon such securities as it proposed to give. Herein also I have been unlucky; for soon after I had written and had sent my Letter to New York to obtain a passage by the Packet, I received an account of this Gentlemans arrival at Boston. These delays following the enquiries, which I only considered as auxiliary to those of the Managers,⁷¹ to whom I intended to communicate the result, will be unlucky if they have taken no steps in the meanwhile themselves. Would it not be advisable in case My good Sir, for you as one of them to go fully into the matter whilst you are at Philadelphia, where, it is to be presumed the best information on this side the Atlantic is to be obtained; and the most likely place to enter into Contracts, unless a person in behalf of the Company, should be sent to Holland expressly for this purpose; or a gentleman there in whom confidence could be placed, would undertake it. But unless Mr. Anderson should succeed in negotiating the loan he was requested to obtain, or the like sum could be borrowed in Holland, we shall be without funds to carry the Plan into effect, and consequently cannot advance beyond the limits of enquiry, or preliminary agreement.

Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to Mrs. Page, who we hope will reap all the benefits which are expected from the change of climate. With very great esteem etc.⁷²

71. Of the Potomac Navigation Co.

72. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On October 3 Washington wrote a brief letter of acknowledgment to Charles William Frederick Dumas, at the Hague. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

To GEORGE MASON

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, October 3, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have this moment received yours of yesterday's date, enclosing a memorial and remonstrance against the Assessment Bill,⁶⁹ which I will read with attention. At *present* I am unable to do it, on account of company. The bill itself I do not recollect ever to have read: with *attention* I am certain I never did, but will compare them together.

Altho, no man's sentiments are more opposed to *any kind* of restraint upon religious principles than mine are; yet I must confess, that I am not amongst the number of those who are so much alarmed at the thoughts of making people pay towards the support of that which they profess, if of the denomination of Christians; or declare themselves Jews, Mahomitans or otherwise, and thereby obtain proper relief. As the matter now stands, I wish an assessment had never been agitated, and as it has gone so far, that the Bill could die an easy death; because I think it will be productive of more quiet to the State, than by enacting it into a Law; which, in my opinion, would be impolitic, admitting there is a decided majority for it, to the disquiet of a respectable minority. In the first case the matter will soon subside; in the latter, it will rankle and perhaps convulse, the State. The Dinner Bell rings, and I must conclude with an expression of my concern for your indisposition. Sincerely and affectionately, I am &.70

69. The bill in question was to provide for teachers of the Christian religion in Virginia by means of a specified tax, the money to be paid out on order of the vestries, elders, etc., of each religious society to a teacher or minister of its denomination. It could also be used to provide places of worship. Mason had printed the remonstrance against the bill and sent it to Washington, asking him to sign it. Mason's letter (October 2) is in the *Washington Papers*, but the remonstrance is not now found therein.

70. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To LUCRETIA WILHEMINA VAN WINTER

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, October 5, 1785.

Madam: It gives me pain to find that the letter which I had the honor of writing to you on the 30th. of March last, in acknowledgement of the Poem you had the goodness to send me thro' the hands of Mr. Vogels, should never have reached you. I now enclose a copy of it, presuming that the original must have miscarried; occasioned by addressing it to that Gentleman at Philadelphia, when possibly he might not have been in this Country.

I have now to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging letter of the 10th. of April, with the Duplicate of the above Poem, for which I thank you, and can only repeat to you my wish, that the subject of it was more deserving of your lays. I pray you to have the goodness to offer my compliments to Mr. Van Winter, and to be assured of the respect and esteem with which, I am, etc.⁷³

To CHARLES ARMAND-TUFFIN⁷⁴

Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Your Letter of the 19th. of May was brought to this place by Mr. Houdon, who arrived here the 3d. of this month. I delay no time to acknowledge the receipt of it, and to thank you for the several communications you have had the goodness to make me.

You are too well acquainted with my wishes for every thing which can promote your interest, honor, or happiness, to suppose that I did not rejoice at the prospect of your being appointed to the command of a Corps; which is agreeable to your own inclination, and which suits your talents: every thing which gratify's the first, and favors the latter, I sincerely wish you may enjoy.

Library of Congress

At present everything in America is tranquil, and I hope will long remain so. It is not our interest to seek new broils, and I hope our neighbours will not commence them. It is not a little misterious however, that the Western Posts, on

73. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The text varies slightly from that printed an the *Journal of American History*, 1930.

74. Marquis de La Rouerie.

the American side the territorial line, should still be possessed by British Garrisons: the mistery, it is to be presumed, will now soon be explained; as an American Minister has been received at the Court of London.

I never expect to draw my sword again: I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it; but if, contrary to all expectation, such an event should take place, I should think it a fortunate circumstance, and myself highly honored, to have it supported by yours. My time is now occupied by rural amusements, in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is, altho' it is against the profession of arms and would clip the wings of some of you young soldiers who are soaring after glory, to see the whole world in peace, and the Inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind.

Mrs. Washington, thankful for your kind remembrance of her, desires me to present her compliments to you. It is unnecessary to assure you of the high esteem etc.⁷⁵

To JAMES WARREN

Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785.

Library of Congress

Dear Sir: The assurances of your friendship, after a silence of more than six years, are extremely pleasing to me. Friendships, formed under the circumstances that ours commenced, are not easily eradicated; and I can assure you, that mine has undergone no

75. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

diminution; every occasion, therefore, of renewing it, will give me pleasure, and I shall be happy at all times to hear of your welfare.

The war, as you have very justly observed, has terminated most advantageously for America, and a fair field is presented to our view; but I confess to you freely, My Dr. Sir, that I do not think we possess wisdom or Justice enough to cultivate it properly. Illiberality, Jealousy, and local policy mix too much in all our public councils for the good government of the Union. In a word, the confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance; and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to. To *me*, it is a solecism in politics: indeed it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a Nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation, who are the creatures of our making, appointed for a limited and short duration, and who are amenable for every action, and recallable at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing, sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of Government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness.

That we have it in our power to become one of the most respectable Nations upon Earth, admits, in my

humble opinion, of no doubt; if we would but pursue a wise, just, and liberal policy towards one another, and would keep good faith with the rest of the World: that our resources

Library of Congress

are ample and encreasing, none can deny; but while they are grudgingly applied, or not applied at all, we give a vital stab to public faith, and shall sink, in the eyes of Europe, into contempt.

It has long been a speculative question among Philosophers and wise men, whether foreign Commerce is of real advantage to any Country; that is, whether the luxury, effeminacy, and corruptions which are introduced along with it; are counter-balanced by the convenience and wealth which it brings with it; but the decision of this question is of very little importance to us: we have abundant reason to be convinced, that the spirit for Trade which pervades these States is not to be restrained; it behooves us then to establish just principles; and this, any more than other matters of national concern, cannot be done by thirteen heads differently constructed and organized. The necessity, therefore, of a controuling power is obvious; and why it should be withheld is beyond my comprehension.

The Agricultural Society, lately established in Philadelphia, promises extensive usefulness if it is prosecuted with spirit. I wish most sincerely that every State in the Union would institute similar ones; and that these Societies would correspond fully and freely with each other, and communicate all useful discoveries founded on practice, with a due attention to climate, soil, and Seasons to the public.

The great works of improving and extending the inland navigations of the two large rivers Potomac and James, which interlock with the waters of the Western Territory, are already begun, and I have little doubt of their

success. The consequences to the Union, in my judgment are immense: more so in a political, than in a commercial view; for unless we can connect the new States which are rising to our view in those regions, with those on the Atlantic by *interest*, (the only binding cement, and no otherwise to be effected but by opening such communications as will make it easier and cheaper for them to bring the product of their labour to our markets, instead of going to the Spaniards southerly, or the British northerly), they will be quite a

Library of Congress

distinct people; and ultimately may be very troublesome neighbours to us. In themselves considered merely as a hardy race, this *may* happen; how much more so, if linked with either of those powers in politics and commerce.

It would afford me great pleasure to go over those grounds in your State with a mind more at ease, than when I travelled them in 1775 and 1776; and to unite in congratulating on the happy change, with those characters, who participated of [*sic*] the anxious moments we passed in those days, and for whom I entertain a sincere regard; but I do not know whether to flatter myself with the enjoyment of it: the deranged state of my affairs, from an absence and total neglect of them for almost nine years, and a pressure of other matters, allow me little leisure for gratifications of this sort. Mrs. Washington offers her compliments and best wishes to Mrs. Warren, to which be pleased to add those of, dear Sir, &c.⁷⁶

76. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS AND MRS. BLACKBURN

Monday, October 10, 1785.

Genl. and Mrs. Washington present their compliments to Colo. and Mrs. Blackburne; are much obliged to them for their kind invitation to the Wedding⁷⁷ on Thursday. They would attend with pleasure, but for the indisposition of the latter; and the particular engagements of the former which confine him at home this week, and oblige him to attend the Board of Directors at Georgetown, the Great Falls, &c. the beginning of next.

The Genl. and Mrs. Washington will always be happy to see the young couple at Mount Vernon.⁷⁶

To THOMAS FREEMAN

Mount Vernon, October 16, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: It is sometime since I wrote in very great haste an answer, or rather an acknowledgement of your letter of the 9th. of June. I will now by Mr. Craig,⁷⁸ endeavour to be more explicit than I was, or could be at that time.

With regard to my Lands on the Ohio and Great Kanhawa, I am not yet inclined to relax from the terms of my printed Advertisement, with a copy of which I furnished you: When I see cause to do it, you shall be duly advertised of the change: in the meantime, if you could discover the *most* advantageous terms which could be obtained, and would advise me thereof, I should be obliged to you. As to the Great Meadow tract, you may rent it on the best terms you can, not exceeding ten years from the first day of January next.

My sentiments with respect to the Mill were so fully given to you in my last (by Dr. Knight)⁷⁹ that it is unnecessary to add aught on that score now. It has cost me too much already (with

77. Of Bushrod Washington and Julia Ann Blackburn.

76. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

78. William Craik (Craig).

79. Dr. John(?) Knight.

out any return) to undergo a repetition of the like expence. If you cannot rent or sell her as there directed, let her return to dust, the first loss may be best.

I informed you in my last, and I presume you were convinced of it before, that I made no agreement with the Tenants on the tract near you, which could exonerate them from paying the rents which were *then* due; consequently they must be made to pay them; otherwise the most deserving of favor (by having paid) are on a worse footing, than the

Library of Congress

least deserving who ought to have paid before I went into the country and explained the terms on which I had directed them to be let.

With respect to Mr. Simpsons quitting the Tenement, I observed to you in my last; that when I *make* a bargain I consider it, to all intents and purposes, as binding on me; consequently that it is so on the person with whom it is made. He may well remember, that upon his expressing an idea that he would try the place one year on the rent it now goes at, I told him *explicitly* he must take it for the period on which it was offered, or not at all; as I did not intend to go thro' the same trouble every year by making an annual bargain for it; and that he acquiesced thereto. It behooves him therefore, and the Tenant likewise, to consider what they are about, as one or the other will be liable to me for the rent, agreeably to the tenure of the Lease. I informed you in my last what had been done with the accounts which were put into my hands by him and Mr. John Jones, and requested him to assign the certificate which I then enclosed, and to

return it to me; but have heard nothing from him since on the subject, which is a little surprizing.

I hope the Hay, Corn and other articles have been sold 'ere this, and that you have received the Cash for them, or good security for the payment of the amount of them.

If Mr. Simpson, contrary to his agreement and good faith, should have moved off my Land; I am at a loss to decide what had best be done with my negroes. It was in consideration of his taking the Plantation, that I agreed to let him have the negroes so cheap: If he is gone, or going from it, he shall hold them no longer on the same terms he has them this year: but my wish would be that you could send them to me at this place, if the measure can be reconciled to them. Simon's countrymen, and Nancy's relations are all here, and would be glad to see them; I would make a Carpenter of Simon, to work along with his shipmate Sambo. At any rate I will not suffer them to go down the river, or to any distance where you cannot have an eye over them.

Library of Congress

What Capt: Crawford did upon my Land on Shirtee in order to save it, must undoubtedly be well known to those who were most intimately connected with him and his movements at that period. Mr. Chas. Morgan is as likely to possess this knowledge as any other; but certainly there must be more, and it may be essential to find them out and to call upon them as evidences in the cause.

In a former Letter I informed you that I had obtained a Patent for the round Bottom; and that it might be rented on the same terms with my other Lands on the Ohio and Great Kanhawa; and I repeat it in this, lest a miscarriage should have happened.

When I was out last fall, I left all my Baggage at Mr. Simpson's, viz, Tents,

Bedding and many other things; of which I hope proper care have and will be taken, if he has, or is about to leave the place. Among other Articles there were two eight gallon Kegs of West India rum, one of them of the first quality. As this is a commodity which is subject to a variety of accidents and misfortunes, I request it may be sold: I will take my chance to procure more when I may come into that Country; which, at present, is uncertain. If the Tents and bedding should get wet, and are not dried, they will be ruined; and therefore pray that particular attention may be paid to them, my Canteens, travelling Trunk &c. &c.

If you have received and paid anything on my account since I was out; it may be well to render a statement of it by Mr. Craig, who will offer a safe and good opportunity to remit what cash may be in your hands consequent of the sales of last fall or by other means, after you have deducted your commissions. If the Bonds which were taken at that time are not paid agreeably to the terms of them, delay no time to recover the money as soon as you can; as I am not inclined to be put off with unmeaning promises, and obliged to sue at last.

If my negroes are to come down, the sooner it could happen the better for the young ones: and a careful person should be hired to take care of them. In this case I would wish

Library of Congress

to have my Baggage (except the Liquor) sent to me at the same time, one trouble and expence would serve both purposes, I am, etc.⁸⁰

80. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN FAIRFAX⁸³

Mount Vernon, October 26, 1785.

You will proceed in the Stage from Alexandria to Boston, without losing a day that can possibly be avoided; and when arrived at the latter place, deliver the Letter herewith given you to the Honr. Thos. Cushing, Lieut: Governor of the State of Massachusetts, who resides in the town of Boston, and whose directions you are to follow.

The intention of your going thither is, to bring one, perhaps two Jack asses, which have been imported for me from Spain: a Spaniard⁸⁴ is arrived with, and attends the first; and probably if the second is arrived,⁸⁵ there will be one with him also: one, or both of these men, according to the instructions they may have received in Spain, or agreeably to the directions you may receive from the Lieut: Governor, are to come on with you and the Jacks.

As you will have to ride back, and as this will be the case also with the Spaniards, (if there are more than one), Horses, if it is thought improper to ride on the Jacks, will be to be bought, and as females will answer my purposes best, I desire you to buy mares: let them be young, sound and of good size, as I propose to put them to the Jacks in the season for covering: Lieut: Govr. Cushing will furnish you with money, and aid you with his advice in this purchase; as also to defray your expenses in returning.

You know too well the high value I set upon these Jacks, to neglect them on the road in any instance whatsoever; but if the one which is now at Boston, and the other if it arrives in time, should come on under their proper keepers, your business will then be to see that

Library of Congress

every thing necessary is provided, leaving the management of them to the Spaniard or Spaniards who will attend them, and who best know how to travel and feed them.

83. An overseer at Mount Vernon.

84. Pedro Tellez.

85. In the *Washington Papers*, under date of Aug. 8, 1785, is the invoice of the shipment of one jackass, 44 Spanish inches high, in the *Ranger*, Job Knight, master, from Bilboa to Gloucester [Massachusetts].

See however (if their keepers are drunken and neglectful) that due attention and care are bestowed on these animals.

As I do not mean to be at the expence of hiring and bringing on an Interpreter (altho' neither of the Spaniards should speak English) you would do well before you leave Boston, where by means of one you can communicate your sentiments to each other, to settle all the necessary points for your journey: that is, your hour for setting out in the morning, which let be early; taking up in the evening, number of feeds in the day, and of what kind of food: also the kind and quantity of Liquor that is to be given to the Spaniards in a day. In this govern yourself by the advice of the Lieut: Governor. I would not debar them of what is proper; any more than I would indulge them in what is not so. Be attentive to the conduct of these men, as from their good or bad dispositions I shall be enabled to judge whether to keep one of them or not; if either shou'd incline to stay in the Country with the Jacks. Having settled the principal points with them before you leave Boston, you will easily understand each other in smaller matters by signs, 'till you return to New York; where by means of the Spanish Minister's attendants, you may if necessary, settle a fresh plan.

Not expecting that you will travel back faster than the Jacks can walk, it is possible you may reach New York before you take a halting day; which, if not *too* far, would be best, as

Library of Congress

here probably the Spaniards will require it, on account of meeting their Countrymen in the family of Mr. Gardoqui,

the Spanish Minister: however, if they think a halt sooner is necessary, you must be governed by their opinions, as the Jacks must not be hurt by travelling them too fast, or improperly.

Let the Jacks be put separate and with no other creatures, lest they should get kicked, and hurt themselves or hurt others; and if it is necessary they should be cloathed, (which you must know before you leave Boston) provide Blankets or such other cloathing as their keepers think best, at that place.

Keep an exact account of your expences from the time you leave home until you return to it again; remembering that Dollars in the States of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and part of New Jersey, pass at 7/6.; bordering on New York, and in that State for 8/., and in all the New England Governments at 6/. as in Virginia, all other silver, and gold, in that proportion.

Altho' I do not think there is any probability of the Jack, or Jacks having left Boston before you will arrive there; yet at, and after you leave the City of New York, it may be well to enquire now and then along the road, whether this may not have taken place; the circumstance of which will be very notorious if it has happened. For this reason, if there is a Stage which passes thro' Hartford in Connecticut, and so along the post road to Boston; it will be better to pursue this rout than to go by the Stage-boat from New York to Providence.

As soon as the Stage gets to its Quarters at night, immediately engage your passage for the next day, lest you may be too late and thereby detained a day or two for its return. Make use of the State *Waggons* , the Stage Coaches are too expensive.

Library of Congress

As soon as you get to Boston, write to me, or get somebody to do it, by the Post, informing me whether there are one, or

two Jacks; in what condition they are, with other particulars, and when you expect to commence your journey back.⁸⁶

To LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR THOMAS CUSHING

Mount Vernon, October 26, 1785.

Dear Sir: The last Post gave me the honor of your favor of the 7th. inst: for which and your care of the Jack and his Keeper, I pray you to accept my grateful thanks.

As the Jack is now safely landed, and as I am unwilling to hazard him again at Sea, I have sent a man in whom I can confide, to conduct him and the Spandiard to this place by Land. The person I send has not the smallest knowledge of the Spanish language, consequently there can be little communication between him and the Spaniard on the road; but if there is a convention established, by means of an Interpreter at Boston, and essentials well understood by the parties before they commence their journey; there will not be such an occasion for an Interpreter on the road, as to be a counterprize for the expence, as Mr. Fairfax whom I send will be both guide and paymaster, leaving nothing for the Spaniard to do but to be attentive to the animal. The hour for starting in the morning and putting up in the evening, and feeding in

86. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The original was said to be in the possession (1930) of Dr. P. T. B. Shaffer, of Elizabeth, Pa.

the meantime being fixed: the halting days, and kind of food for the Jack and manner of treating the Spaniard settled and clearly understood; will remove all difficulties of consequence on the road, at least 'till they get to New York, where by means of the

Library of Congress

Spanish Minister's attendants an explanation of them, if any their be, may enable the parties to pursue the rest of their journey with more ease.

As I expect two Jacks it would give me great pleasure if the second should have arrived; that one trouble and expence might serve both. Mr. Fairfax, the bearer of this, goes from hence to Boston in the Stage, and will have to buy a horse to return home upon. I preferred this method on account of the dispatch with which he would reach Boston, and because the whole journey might be too much for one horse taken from hence, to perform in a short time. If the Jack is led, two horses will be wanted, and if two Jacks are arrived, three may be necessary. These uncertainties, and the danger of trusting a large sum in specie to a man who has not been much accusom'd to the care of it, tho' perfectly honest, have induced me to request the favor of you to obtain from any of the Merchants in Boston who have dealings in, and who may want to make remittances to Alexandria, as much money as will make these purchases, and defray the expenses of the Men and Horses back to me; the Bill, for the amount of which, shall be paid at sight; as also the charges which Mr. Peace may have against me, the cost of getting him from Gloucester to you, and such other expences as may have arisen during their stay in Boston, in short the whole. Mr. Fairfax has directions with respect to the kind of horses I want, and will take your advice how to procure them on the best terms, as well as in all other matters, for the favor of which I shall be much obliged to you.

Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to Mrs. Cushing, your son and daughter; and with great esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.⁸⁷

To JAMES MADISON

Mount Vernon, October 29, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Receive my thanks for your obliging favor of the 20th., with its enclosure, of the latter I now avail myself in a letter to the Governor, for the General Assembly. Your delicate sensibility deserves my particular acknowledgements: both your requests are

Library of Congress

complied with, the first, by congeniality of sentiment; the second because I would fulfill your desire.

Conceiving it would be better to suggest a wish, than to propose an absolute condition of acceptance; I have so expressed myself to the Assembly, and shall be obliged to you, not only for information of the result, but (if there is an acquiescence on the part of the Country) for your sentiments respecting the appropriations; from what may be said upon the occasion, you will learn what would be most pleasing, and of the greatest utility to the public.

By Colo. Henry Lee I sent you the reports of the Secretary for

87. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

foreign affairs on the Consular Department. I hope you have received them.

With every sentiment of esteem, etc.⁸⁸

88. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, October 29, 1785.

Sir: Your Excellency having been pleased to transmit to me a copy of the Act⁸⁹ appropriating to my benefit certain shares in the companies for opening the navigation of James and Potomac rivers; I take the liberty of returning to the General Assembly, thro' your hands, the profound and grateful acknowledgments inspired by so signal a mark of their beneficent intentions towards me. I beg you Sir, to assure them, that I am filled on this occasion with every sentiment, which can flow from a heart warm with love for my Country, sensible to every token of its approbation and affection, and solicitous to testify in every instance a respectful submission to its wishes.

Library of Congress

With these sentiments in my bosom, I need not dwell on the anxiety I feel in being obliged in this instance to decline a favor which is rendered no less flattering by the manner in which it is conveyed, than it is affectionate in itself. In explaining this observation I pass over a comparison of my endeavors in the public service with the many honorable testimonies of approbation which have already so far over rated and over paid them; reciting one consideration only which supersedes the necessity of recurring to every other.

When I was first called to the station with which I was honored during the late conflict for our liberties, to the diffidence which I had so many reasons to feel in accepting it, I thought it my duty to join a firm resolution to shut my hand against every pecuniary recompense.

89. The Assembly forthwith passed an act that the shares with the tolls and profits should stand appropriated to such objects of a public nature as Washington should so deed during his life or direct by his last will and testament. A certified copy of this act is in the *Washington Papers*, under date of Oct. 17, 1785.

To this resolution I have invariably adhered, and from it (if I had the inclination) I do not consider myself at liberty now to depart.

Whilst I repeat therefore my fervent acknowledgments to the legislature for their very kind sentiments and intentions in my favor, and at the same time beg them to be persuaded that a remembrance of this singular proof of their goodness towards me, will never cease to cherish returns of the warmest affection and gratitude, I must pray that their Act, so far as it has for its object my personal emolument, may not have its effect; but if it should please the General Assembly to permit me to turn the destination of the fund vested in me, from my private emolument, to objects of a public nature, it will be my study in selecting these to prove the sincerity of my gratitude for the honor conferred on me, by preferring such as may appear most subservient to the enlightened and patriotic views of the Legislature. With great respect etc.⁹⁰

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, October 30, 1785.

My dear Humphreys: Since my last of the 1st. of September I have received your favour of the 17th. of July, which was brought to this country by Mr. Houdon; to whom, tho I had no agency in the matter, I feel great obligations for quitting France, and the pressing calls of the Great Ones to make a bust of me from the life. I am not less indebted to the favourable opinion of those who you say are anxious to perpetuate

90. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

my name, and to be acquainted with the memoirs of my life. So far as these are connected with the history of the revolution, and other public documents, they may easily be got at; all beyond these is, I conceive very unimportant. My letter of the 25th. of July which I presume you have received long 'ere this (but for fear of a miscarriage having a rough copy by me, I send you a duplicate) will have conveyed my sentiments so fully that I shall add nothing further on the subject at this time, than to assure you that I was then, and am still perfectly sincere in the proposal it contained.

I am very much obliged to you for the poem you sent me, I have read it with pleasure, and it is much admired by all those to whom I have showed it.

Nothing has happened since my last; nor is it probable any thing interesting will happen until the different Assemblies convene. Congress as usual, are proceeding very slowly in their business, and shameful as it is, are often at a stand for want of a sufficient representation. The States have been addressed by them on the subject, but what will be the effect I know not. To me there appears such lassitude in our public Councils as is truly Shocking; and must clog the wheels of Government; which under such circumstances will either stop altogether, or will be moved by ignorance or a few designing men.

Library of Congress

With every sentiment of esteem etc.⁹¹

91. The text is from the Washington-Humphreys copies in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., furnished through the kindness of R. W. G. Vail, librarian.

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, November 2, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 10th. ulto. together with the wheat from the Cape of Good Hope; which you were so obliging as to send me by the Revd. Mr. Griffith; for both I thank you. The latter shall have a fair trial in the same inclosure with some presented to me by Colo. Spaight, (a Delegate in Congress from No. Carolina) which had been planted, and had obtained a vigorous growth

before yours came to hand. This also was from the Cape, and brought probably by the same Vessel. I sowed it in Drills two feet apart, and five inches asunder in the rows, to make the most I could of it by cultivation in the Spring: this method will in my opinion be more productive than Mr. Bordeley's. It ought to be so indeed, as the expence of ground is much greater, and the workings will probably be oftener.

I pray you to present my best wishes and most respectful compliments to Mrs. Powel, to which please to add, and to accept yourself those of Mrs. Washington. I have the honor, etc.⁹³

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, November 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Pursuant to the request of your last letter (dated about the middle of Septr.) I had an attested copy of the proceedings, of the Potomac Company, and those of the Directors, taken from their Books and sent it to you by Post, in time for the Meeting which

Library of Congress

was proposed to be held by the Directors of the James river navigation on the 26th. of that month in Richmond; and requested, if it should be agreeable, to have a copy of your proceedings sent me in return. Having heard nothing from you since, and having experienced many instances of inattention and neglect in the Post Offices; I now take the liberty of enquiring whether my letter written as

93. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

above has reached you. If it has not I will send another copy, tho' it will not come so seasonably as the first. My best respects to your Lady, and with very great esteem and regard, I am, etc.⁹⁴

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, November 8, 1785.

My Dr. Marqs: Having written fully to you about the first of Septr.; and nothing having occurred since worth reciting, I should not have given you the trouble of receiving a letter from me at this time, were it not for the good opportunity afforded me by Captn. Littlepage, and my desire not to suffer any of your letters to remain long by me unacknowledged.

I have now to thank you for your favors of the 9th. and 14th. of July; the first by Mr.

94. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 6 Washington wrote a brief note of introduction for Noah Webster to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Delegates of Virginia.

Houdon, who stayed no more than a fortnight with me; and to whom, for his trouble and risk in crossing the Seas (altho' I had no agency in the business) I feel myself under personal obligations. The second giving an account of your intended tour, which, if compleated in the time you propose, will exhibit a fresh instance of the celerity of your

Library of Congress

movements. My good wishes have attended you thro' the whole of it; and this letter I hope will find you arrived at Paris in good health.

Doctr. Franklin has met with a grateful reception in Pennsylvania. He has again embarked on a troubled ocean; I am persuaded with the best designs, but I wish his purposes may be answered, which, undoubtedly are to reconcile the jarring interests of the State. He permitted himself to be nominated for the City of Philadelphia as a Counsellor, a step to the chair,⁹⁵ wch. no doubt he will fill; but whether to the satisfaction of both parties is a question of some magnitude, and of real importance to himself, at least to his quiet. His Grandson⁹⁶ shall meet with every civility and attention I can show him, when occasions offer.

One of my Jack's is by advices, arrived at Boston; but I still adhere to the request contained in my last, if you can have it complied with without much difficulty.

Your old aid George has taken to himself the wife of his choice: the *honey moon* is not yet passed; when that is over, I will set him about copying your Letters. I add no more at present, but the sincere and affectionate

95. Of President of Pennsylvania.

96. William Temple Franklin.

regard which I bear to you, and in which Mrs. Washington and all here join; as we do in respectful compliments and best wishes for Madame de Lafayette and your little flock. It is unnecessary to tell you how much I am, &c.⁹⁷

To GEORGE CHAPMAN

Mount Vernon, November 10, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: I rely more upon your goodness than on any just claim I can have for your excuse, for the liberty I am about to take with you.

I have a little boy something turned of four, and a girl of six years old living with me, for whom I want a Tutor. They are both promising children, the latter is a very fine one, and altho' they are of an age when close confinement may be improper; yet a man of letters, most of composition, and a good accomptant, would in other respects be essentially useful to *me* for a year or two to come. May I ask you therefore Sir, if it is in your power, conveniently, to engage a person of this description for me?

Having already informed you what my wants are, it is needless to add what those of the children must be; your own judgement, when I inform you that I mean to fit the boy, in my own family, for a University, will point these out. The greater the knowledge of his preceptor is, the better he would suit. To teach French grammatically is essential, as it is now becoming

97. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

a part of the education of youth in this Country.

I could not afford to give more than £50 Sterlg. pr. ann:but this sum, except in the article of cloathing, wou'd be clear, as the Gentleman would eat at my table; and have his lodging and washing found him; and his Linen and stockings mended by the Servants of my Family. It may happen that an Episcopal clergyman with a small living, and unencumbered by a family may be had to answer this description, such an one would be preferred; but I except none who is competent to my purposes, if his character is unimpeached.

I will make no apology to you Sir, for this liberty, you will oblige me if you can serve me; but I do not mean to put you to much trouble to do it. At any rate let me entreat an

Library of Congress

acknowledgement of this letter, with your sentiments upon it; as I shall remain in a state of suspense until I hear from you. I am, etc.98

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, November 10, 1785.

My Dear Sir: Inclosed you have a copy of my last; since which nothing has occurred worthy of observation,

98. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

except that in this part of the Country our Crops, particularly of Indian Corn, have suffered exceedingly by a drought in July and August, and a storm in September.

As I am in the habit of giving you trouble, I will add a little more to what my last, I fear, may have occasioned.

The two youngest children of Mr. Custis: the oldest a girl of six years, the other a boy a little turned of four live with me. They are both promising children; but the latter is a remarkable fine one and my intention is to give him a liberal education; the rudiments of which shall, if I live, be in my own family. Having premised this, let me next, my good Sir, ask if it is in your power conveniently, to engage a proper preceptor for him? at present, and for a year or two to come, much confinement would be improper for him; but this being the period in which I should derive more aid from a man of Letters and an accomptant than at any other, to assist me in my numerous correspondences, and to extricate the latter from the disordered state into which they have been thrown by the war, I could usefully employ him in this manner until his attention should be more immediately required for his pupil.

Fifty or Sixty pounds Sterling pr. ann. with board, lodging, washing and mending, *in the family*, is the most my numerous expenditures will allow me to give; but how far it

Library of Congress

may command the services of a person well qualified to answer the purposes I have mentioned, is not for me to decide. To answer *my* purposes, the Gentleman must be a Master of composition, and a good Accomptant: to answer his pupil's, he must be a classical scholar, and capable of teaching the French language grammatically: the more universal his knowledge is, the better.

It sometimes happens that very worthy men of the *Cloth* come under this description; men who are advanced in years, and not very comfortable in their circumstances: such an one, if unencumbered with a family, would be more agreeable to me than a young man just from college; but I except none of good moral character, answering my description, if he can be well recommended.

To you my Dr. Sir, I have offered this my first address; but if you should think my purposes cannot be subserved in your circle, upon the terms here mentioned; I beg, in that case, that you will be so obliging as to forward the enclosed letter as it is directed.⁹⁹ This gentleman has written to me upon another subject, and favored me with his lucubrations upon Education, wch mark him a man of abilities, at the same time that he is highly spoken of as a teacher, and a person of good character. In Scotland we all know that education is cheap, and wages not so high as in England: but I would prefer, on acct. of the dialect, an Englishman to a Scotchman, for all the purposes I want.

We have commenced our operations on the navigation of this river; and I am happy to inform you, that the difficulties rather vanish than increase as we proceed. James river is under similar circumstances; and a cut between the waters of Albemarle in No. Carolina, and Elizabeth river in this State, is also in contemplation, and if the whole is effected, and I see nothing to prevent it, it will give the greatest and most advantageous inland Navigation to this Country of any in the Union, or I believe, in the world: for as the Shannondoah, the South branch,

Library of Congress

99. See Washington's letter to George Chapman, Nov. 10, 1785, *ante*.

Monocasy and Conogochegue are equally capable of great improvement, they will no doubt be immediately attempted; and more than probable a communication by good roads will be opened with the waters to the Westward of us; by means of the No. Branch of Potomac, which interlocks with the Cheat river and Yohoghaney (branches of the Monongahela) that empty into the Ohio at Fort Pitt. The same is equally practicable between James river and the Green briar a branch of the Great Kanhawa, which empties into the same river 300 miles below that place; by means whereof the whole trade of that Territory which is now unfolding to our view, may be drawn into this State, equally productive of political as commercial advantages.

As I never ride to my plantations without seeing something which makes me regret having continued so long in the ruinous mode of farming, which we are in; I beg leave, tho' I am persuaded it will give you trouble, to recall your attention to the requests of my former letter, the duplicate of which you now have. Miscarriages, and where this is not the case, delays of letters must be my apology for reiterating the matter, that there may be time for decision, before the intervention of another year.

The marriage mentioned in my last is celebrated, but a fit of the gout prevented Colo. Bassett from being at it, consequently I am to lay a little longer out of your kind present. Mrs. Washington who has very indifferent health, joins me in the sincerest and best wishes for every blessing which can be bestowed on Mrs. Fairfax and yourself. With great esteem, &c.

P.S. Since writing the above and foregoing I have seen Mr. Battaile Muse who looks after your Estate; and upon enquiry of him, am authorized to inform you that your negroes, and everything under his care are tolerably well, and your prospect of a crop midling, which is saying a good deal *this year* .

Library of Congress

I have the pleasure also to inform you that your Brother and his family were very well a few days ago when I was there, attending the business of the Potomac company at the Great Falls.

Your Sister and Family are likewise well. I saw her three oldest daughters last week, the elder of them, Milly, is on the eve of matrimony with a Mr. Ogden Throckmorton, a match not very agreeable, it is said, to *her* friends, and kept off by Mrs. Bushrod 'till her death which happened some three or four months ago but now is yielded to by her Parents).¹

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH

Mount Vernon, November 11, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: I pray you to accept my thanks for your favor of the second, and for the present which it announced; than which nothing could be more acceptable, as I am desirous of getting into a stock of Deer with as much expedition as the nature of the case will admit. But if the Doe you offer me is not inconvenient to yourself; I shou'd be glad if she could remain at

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Chatham until a small paddock which I intend to enclose this Winter for the reception of these animals, is railed in, when I will fall upon some method, least liable to accidents, to bring her up.

I congratulate you on your success on the Falmouth turf. Our old acquaintance Saml. Gallaway retired from the Alexa. races, and from the poms and vanities of this World almost in the same instant, having taken his departure for the impervious shades of death as soon as he got home.

Library of Congress

My respectful compliments, in which Mrs. Washington, are offered to Mrs. Fitzhugh. I am, etc.¹

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, November 11, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: I was at the point of sealing the dispatches herewith enclosed, when I recd. a visit from a Gentleman of New England, and happening to mention my want of a person for the purposes recited in my letter to you of yesterday's date, he seemed to think that such a character as I have there described, might be had from their Colleges upon very moderate terms, and promised to make enquiry, and to advise me of the result in a little time after his return.

The intention therefore of this letter is to request that the enclosure for Mr. Chapman may be detained in your hands until you hear further from me on this subject. But I would wish, notwithstanding, that *you*

1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

would do me the favor to extend *your* enquiries, and revolve characters in your own mind, against I shall hear from my New England correspondent that in case of a disappointment *there*, and I am not sanguine in my expectations from that quarter, I may be advanced in this business on your side the Atlantic.

With the greatest esteem, etc.²

To JOHN MARSDEN PINTARD

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 19th. of August from Madeira, accompanied by a box of Citron, Lemons and Onions; for which I pray you to accept my grateful thanks.

If a favourable opportunity should offer directly to this River, at a proper season of the year, you would encrease the obligation you have already laid me under, by sending me a few slips of the Vines of your best eating Grape; and a young fig tree or two.

From my esteem for your father, and the good opinion I have always heard expressed of you, it gives me pleasure to learn that you are appointed by Congress Commercial Agent for the United States, and I wish you may long continue in the Office to the mutual satisfac

2. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

tion of yourself and employers. I am, etc.³

To CHARLES VAUGHAN

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 25th. of Septr. by Mr. Corbett. I am at a loss to express my sense of the great attention of Mr. Vaughan (your good father) to me, or of the obliging manner in which you have executed his request. The Puncheon of rum is safe arrived, and I pray you to accept my acknowledgement of, and to offer my thanks for it to your generous parent: I wish I had something more agreeable to present him.

I pray you to accept a dozen barrels of the Superfine flour which I make at my Mill. The quality of it is generally esteemed, and I hope what I now send will not discredit the mart.

It is to be regretted that Countries which could mutually assist and benefit each other; and which have a disposition to do, shou'd be prevented by an interposing power: but this being the case, I despair of seeing any change in the political system until G: B. is

Library of Congress

convinced by experience, that the contracted and illiberal policy she is now pursuing has recoiled upon herself. In the meantime it is to be lamented that any of her distant Dependencies should suffer from the effect of such ill judged regulations.

Being now fixed under my own Vine, and my own Fig tree, it would give me great pleasure to entertain you in the shade of them:

3. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

there to assure you of the esteem and regard with which, I have the honor, etc.

P.S. The flour intended for your use is branded on the *head* of the Cask G. Washington Bur Superfine and marked and numbered on the *side* S. V.—No. 1—12.4

To JOHN RUMNEY

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1785.

Sir: Since my last, I have been favored with your Letter of the 3d. of July, accompanied by patterns of the Irish flag; but as the prices were not annexed, I could form no judgment, nor make any choice from a

4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

comparison thereof with those of the former: nor indeed is it now essential, as the one I had fixed upon in my last, is cheaper I presume than either of the present samples wou'd be, and will answer my purposes equally well. I hope too the former are in forwardness, and that I may expect them soon, at any rate before the season for laying them shall advance upon me.

Library of Congress

Inclosed I send you a Bill on London for fifty pounds sterling towards payment for these Flags; and will follow it with another to the full amount as soon as I am informed of the cost of them.

I acquainted you in my last that the House Joiner whom you sent me, answered my expectations fully. He is a good workman and a sober well behaved man. I am thankful to you for making so advantageous a choice; but as there seems to be a difficulty in obtaining a Brick layer, and indeed a risk attending it which I was not acquainted with at the time I applied to you to procure these artizans for me, I now wish you to decline all further enquiries after one.

I pray you to present (when opportunity offers) my respects to your father; and to be assured yourself of the esteem and regard with which I am, etc.⁴

4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To LUND WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, November 20, 1785.

Dear Lund: I know as little of G: Ws.⁵ plans or wishes as you do, never having exchanged a word with him upon the subject in my life. By his Advertisemt. and from what has frequently dropped from Fanny, he is desirous of getting a place in this Country to live at.

Before their marriage he and Fanny were both told that it would be very agreeable to Mrs. W. and myself, that they should make this House their home 'till the squalling and trouble of children might become disagreeable. I have not repeated the matter since, because it was unnecessary, an offer once made is sufficient. It is hardly to be expected that two people young as they are, with their nearest connexions at extreme points, would like confinement: and without it, he could not answer my purposes as a Manager

Library of Congress

or Superintend, unless I had more leisure to attend to my own business; which by the by I shall aim at, let the consequences, in other respects, be as they may.

These however are no reasons for detaining you a moment longer in my employ than suits your interest, or is agreeable to your inclination, and family concerns. But as the proposition is new, and hath never been revolved in my mind, it will take some time to digest my own thoughts upon the occasion before it is hinted to another.

In the mean while if I can do with the aids you offer, and for which I sincerely thank you, I will ask your constant attention no longer than this year,

5. George Augustine Washington.

at any rate not longer than the next. The inexplicitness of this answer cannot, I presume, put you to much if any inconvenience as yet; because retirement from, and not a change of business, is professedly your object.

However unlucky I may have been in Crops, &c. of late years, I shall always retain a grateful sense of your endeavors to serve me; for as I have repeatedly intimated to you in my Letters from Camp, nothing but that entire confidence which I reposed, could have made me easy under an absence of almost nine years from my family and Estate, or could have enabled me, consequently, to have given not only my time, but my whole attention to the public concerns of this Country for that space. I am, &c.6

6. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 20 Washington answered, briefly, an application from Alexander de Gabian, of Marseilles, France, who applied for membership in the Society of the Cincinnati. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

To REVEREND STEPHEN BLOOMER BALCH

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, November 22, 1785.

Revd. Sir: The expence attending the residence of my Nephews at Georgetown so far exceeds the idea I was led to entertain when they went there, that, in behalf of their Guardians, I am compelled to remove them.

When they were sent to the Academy under your management, I was informed by Colo. Fitzhugh, that the charge for schooling Board (if I am not mistaken) was £31. each. Cloathing if judiciously applied and properly attended to, I knew could not be a very great expence, for boys of their standing. But to my surprize, I have already paid Mr. Stoddert £67.18.6., Mr. Bayly £55.5.2., and yesterday in a letter from the latter, I am informed that there is half a years board due to him for each, and an accot. of cloathing besides, yet to be exhibited.

The leading motive Sir, which influenced me to send them to Georgetown was, their boarding with you; and I expected from what had passed between us, after the intervention which had occasioned the suspension of it, they would have returned to you: but now Mr. Bayly writes me that he also declines boarding them after the 24th. inst: and points out a third person.

These several circumstances combining, added to a conviction founded in experience, that I cannot restrain the profuse and improper advances of Goods for them at a distance, have induced me to bring them to Alexandria, where I shall be a witness to their wants, and can supply their necessities upon more

advantageous terms, than they have been hitherto. I am, etc.⁷

To DOCTOR WILLIAM BROWN¹¹

Mount Vernon, November 24, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: I am really ashamed at this late hour to have the receipt of your favor of the 7th. of Octor., to acknowledge: but the truth is it was handed to me among many other Letters, got buried, and was forgot until your second favor of the 8th. inst: brought it to remembrance.

Since the receipt of the latter, my time has been much occupied with several matters, some of which were pressing: these, with the expectation of a personal interview (for I have been twice since in Alexandria without seeing you) must plead my excuse for a seeming, tho' far from an intentional disrespect.

As nothing is of more importance than the education of youth, so consequently nothing can be more laudably beneficial than the association which is formed in Alexandria to effect this desireable purpose. I therefore not only highly approve the institution, but am thankful for the honor done me by enrolling my name among the Managers of it; and as far as it is in my power will give it support.

There is a matter which I will take some other opportunity of bringing before the Trustees for their consideration; that, if it can be made to comport with the present establishment of the Alexandria Academy, and engrafted therewith, it may become part of the institution. At an hour of more leisure I will

7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

11. Of Alexandria, Va.

communicate it. In the meanwhile, I am, etc.¹²

To LAWRENCE KORTRIGHT

Mount Vernon, November 25, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: If it was in my power to give you the information, and the satisfaction which is required in your letter of the 10th. of October, I would do it with pleasure: but not recollecting enough of the particular circumstances attending the Sloop Hester, the whole of the business respecting this and other vessels, being entirely within the Department of the Quarter Mr. General, I can offer nothing which will facilitate your settlement with the public.

I do remember very well that the service, in the Spring of 1776, required an impress, and purchase of Vessels; that orders issued to the Quarter Master General for that purpose; and I have some recollection that the Sloop Hester was one of those Vessels which were taken into the service of the public, and that she was afterwards sold to Colo. Sears: but upon what terms; what became of her after that; how the Accots. respecting her stand, or how the matter is to be finally settled, I know not. I am, etc.¹⁴

12. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

14. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, November 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since I had the honor of writing to you on the 20th. of March, which was done in haste (having but little notice of Capt: Boyles intended departure, before the time appointed for his sailing, and then to send my dispatches to Richmond 125 miles), I have been favored with your letters of the 3d. of March, 25th. of May, and 23d. of July. The first was forwarded to me by Captn. Bibby, whom I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing; tho' he gives me assurances of it, and to whom I shall have pleasure in rendering any services in my power consistently, if it should be found necessary.

The opposition which the virtuous characters of Ireland have given to the attempts of a British Administration's interfering with its manufactures, fettering its commerce, restraining

Library of Congress

the liberties of its subjects by their plan of reform &ca. &ca., will hand their names to posterity with that veneration and respect to which their amor patriae entitles them.

Precedents, as you justly observe, are dangerous things, they form the arm which first arrests the liberties and happiness of a Country. In the first approaches they may indeed assume the garb of plausibility and moderation, and are generally spoken of by the movers as a *chip in the porrage* (to avoid giving alarm), but soon are made to speak a language equally decisive and irresistible; which shews the necessity of opposition in the first attempts to establish them, let them appear under what guise or Courtly form they may; and proves too that vigilance and watchfulness can scarcely be carried to an excess in guarding against the insidious arts of a Government founded in corruption.

I do not think there is as much wisdom and sound policy displayed in the different

Legislatures of these States as might be; yet I hope every thing will come right *at last*. In republican Governments it too often happens that the people (not always seeing) must *feel* before they act: this is productive of errors and temporary evils, but generally these evils are of a nature to work their own cure.

The situation of affairs in Ireland, whilst the propositions were pending in the Parliament of it, would, I concluded, be a means of postponing your voyage to this Country; but as these seem to have met their quietus, I hope nothing else will intervene to prevent your fulfilling your expectation of coming in the Spring; the season will then be favourable for crossing the Atlantic.

Had I been present and apprized of your intention of making an aerial voyage with Monsr. Potain, I should have joined my entreaties to those of Lady Newenham to have prevented it. As yet, I see no object to warrant a gentleman of fortune (happy in himself, happy in a family wch. might be rendered miserable by a disaster, against which no human foresight can guard) running such a risk. It may do for young men of science and spirit to explore the upper regions: the observation there made may serve to ascertain the utility of the first

Library of Congress

discovery, and how far it may be applied to valuable purposes. To such *alone* I think these voyages ought at present to be consigned, and to them handsome public encouragements should be offer'd for the risk they run in ascertaining its usefulness, or the inutility of the pursuit.

I have neither seen, nor heard of Mr. Thorpe, the stucco worker mentioned in your letter of the 23d. of July. A *good man* acquainted with that business would have come very opportunely to me, as I had, and now have a large room which I am about to finish in this way. I have at length engaged a person to do it; who from having no rival, imposes his own terms, which I think are exorbitant; good workmen of any profession, would meet encouragement in these States.

For the many marks of attention which you have been pleased to bestow on me, I feel myself your Debtor: could my picture which is placed in a group with Dr. Franklin, the Marqs. de la Fayette and others in your library, speak the sentiments of the original, it would salute you every morning with its acknowledgements. I have never seen more than one picture of Genl. Green, and that a mezzotinto print, sent to me a few clays ago only, by the publisher a Mr. Brown at No. 10 George Yard, Lombard street, London; taken it is said from a painting done at Philada.

The Magazines, Gazettes &ca. which you had the goodness to forward to me, came safe, and I pray you to accept my thanks for them. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Lady Newenham and yourself. With sentiments of great esteem and regard, I am, etc.¹³

13. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To CHEVALIER JOHN PAUL JONES**

Mount Vernon, November 25, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: I have been honoured with your letter of the 18th. of July from Paris, enclosing certificates in favor of Captns. Stack and Macarthy.¹⁵ I pray you to be assured that I should have pleasure in doing justice to the merits of these Officers, and in obliging you if the power of deciding lay with me. But, though I am in sentiment with the Gentlemen who have declared in favor of the pretensions of Captns. Stack and Maccarthy's right to become members of the Cincinnati, yet, in matters of opinion I have no authority to pronounce them such. As French Officers, having borne Continental Commissions, my opinion is that their best mode *would* have been, to have got themselves admitted as members of [some]¹⁶ State Society before the Kings edict, or order in Council took effect, for if I mistake not all Officers in the Service of France whose names are not particularly enumerated in that order are excluded thereby.

This however is a matter of which they, or you, can be better ascertained of than I. At any rate nothing can be done in this Country until the next *General* Meeting; and that cannot happen in less than Eighteen months, and may be much longer delayed. I have the honor etc.

[M.L.]

15. Capts. Edward Stack and Eugene MacCarthy had served as volunteers on the *Bon Homme Richard*.

16. The bracketed word has been supplied from the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 26 Washington commenced a record on folio sheets of work done at the different farms of Mount Vernon. He continued it up to Apr. 15, 1786, inclusive. George Augustine Washington then kept the record, commencing April 22, and continued it through the year 1786. These folio sheets are in the *Washington Papers* under date of Nov. 26, 1785.

To WAKELIN WELCH

Mount Vernon, November 28, 1785.

Sir: I request the favor of you to send me for the use of Mrs. Washington, a handsome and fashionable gold watch, with a fashionable chain or string, such as are worn at present by Ladies in genteel life.

These to be paid for, as the other things are, from the fund in the Bank. I am, etc.

P.S. Let the hour and minute hands be set with Diamonds.¹⁷

To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 16th. came duly to hand, and I thank you for its several communications. The resolutions which were published for consideration, vesting Congress with powers to regulate the Commerce of the Union, have I hope been acceded to. If the States individually were to attempt this, an abortion, or a many headed Monster would be the issue. If we consider ourselves, or wish to be considered by others as a united people, why not adopt the measures which are characteristic of it, and support the honor and dignity of one? If we are afraid to trust one another under qualified powers there is an end of the Union. Why then need we be solicitous to keep up the farce of it?

It gives me pleasure to hear that there is such an accordance of sentiments between the Eastern and Western parts of this State. My opinion of the separation

17. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

has always been, to meet them half way, upon fair and just grounds; and part like friends disposed to acts of brotherly kindness thereafter. I wish you had mention'd the

Library of Congress

territorial line between us. The Port Bill; the assize Law (or any substitute for the speedy Administration of Justice) being established; good faith with respect to treaties preserved by public acts, taxation continued and regularly collected, that justice to one part of the community may keep pace with relief to the other, and our national character for *Justice*, thereby supported; a due attention to the Militia, and encouragements to extend the inland navigation of this Commonwealth where it is useful and practicable, (which will not only be of amazing convenience and advantage to its Citizens but sources of immense wealth to the Country through some of its channels), are among the great and important objects which will come before you, and a due attention to them will, I hope, mark the present epocha for having produced able statesmen, sound patriots and liberal minded men.

At a late meeting of the Directors of the Potomac navigation at the great Falls, and from a critical examination of the ground at that place; we unanimously determined to petition the Assemblies of the two States²¹ to be relieved from the expence of sinking our canals four feet deep, as a considerable *expence* and *no advantage* that we could discover, was likely to attend it. As the petition which is herewith sent under cover to you and Colo. Syms,²² recites the reasons on which it is founded I shall not repeat them: the public

21. The text of this petition is printed in the *American Historical Review*, vol. 28, PP. 497, *et seq.*

22. Col. Charles Simms.

as well as the company's interest calls for an œconomical use of the fund which is subscribed for this undertaking; the enemies therefore (if there are any) to the navigation, are equally bound with its friends, to give it support.

I should be much obliged to you for desiring the public printer to send me the Journals of the present Session from its commencement, and to do it thro' the session as fast as they

Library of Congress

are printed, by the Post. I pray you to pay him for *them* , and for my Gazette (if Hay is the public printer) and I will repay you with thanks when you return.

I am very glad to hear you have got so well over your fever. Mrs. Stuart has had a bad cold, but is getting better. All here join me in best wishes for you, and I am, etc.²³

***To JAMES MADISON**

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

My dear Sir: Receive my thanks for your obliging communications of the 11th I hear with much pleasure that the Assembly are engaged, seriously, in the consideration of the revised Laws. A short and simple code, in my opinion, tho' I have the sentiments of some of the Gentlemen of the long robe against me, would be productive of happy consequences, and redound to the honor of this or any Country which shall adopt such.

I hope the resolutions which were published for the consideration of the House,

23. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

respecting the reference to Congress for the regulation of a Commercial system will have passed. The proposition in my opinion is so self evident that I confess I am at a loss to discover wherein lyes the weight of the objection to the measure. We are either a United people, or we are not. If the former, let us, in all matters of general concern act as a nation, which have national objects to promote, and a national character to support. If we are not, let us no longer act a farce by pretending to it. for whilst we are playing a dble. game, or playing a game between the two we never shall be consistent or respectable; but *may* be the dupes of some powers and, most assuredly, the contempt of all. In any case it behoves us to provide good Military Laws, and look well to the execution of them, but, if we mean by our conduct that the States shall act independently of each other it becomes *indispensably* necessary, for therein will consist our strength and respectability in the Union.

Library of Congress

It is much to be wished that public faith may be held inviolate. Painful is it even in thought that attempts should be made to weaken the bands of it. It is a dangerous experiment, once slacken the reins and the power is lost, and it is questionable with me whether the advocates of the measure foresee all the consequences of it. It is an old adage that honesty is the best policy; this applies to public as well as private life, to States as well as individuals. I hope the Port and assize Bills no longer sleep, but are awakened to a happy establishment. The first with some alterations, would, in my judgment be productive of great good to this Country;

without it, the Trade thereof I conceive will ever labor and languish; with respect to the Second if it institutes a speedier Administration of Justice it is equally desirable.

It gives me great pleasure to hear that our assembly were in a way of adopting a mode for establishing the Cut betwn. Elizabeth river and Pasquotank which was likely to meet the approbation of the State of No. Carolina. It appears to me that no Country in the Universe is better calculated to derive benefits from inland Navigation than this is, and certain I am, that the conveniences to the Citizens individually, and the sources of wealth to the Country generally, which will be opened thereby will be found to exceed the most sanguine imagination; the Mind can scarcely take in at one view all the benefits which will result therefrom. The saving in draught Cattle, preservation of Roads &ca. &ca. will be felt most interestingly. This business only wants a beginning. Rappahanock, Shannondoah, Roanoke, and the branches of York River will soon perceive the advantages which water transportation (in ways hardly thought of at first) have over that of Land and will extend Navigation to almost every marts door.

From the complexion of the debates in the Pensylvania it should seem as if that Legislature intended their assent to the proposition from the States of Virginia and Maryland (respecting a road to the Yohiogany should be conditional of permission given to open a Communication between the Chesapeak and Delaware by way of the rivers Elk

Library of Congress

and Christeen, which I am sure will never be obtained if the Baltimore interest can give it effectual opposition.

The Directors of the Potomack Company have sent to the Delegates of this County to be laid before the Assembly a Petition

(which sets forth the reasons) for relief in the depth of the Canals which it may be found necessary to open at the great and little Falls of the River. As public œconomy and private interest equally prompt the measure and no possible disadvantage that we can see will attend granting the prayer of it, we flatter ourselves no opposition will be given to it.

To save trouble to expedite the business, and to secure uniformity without delay, or an intercourse between the Assemblies on so trivial a matter we have taken the liberty of sending the draught of a Bill to Members of both Assemblies which if approved will be found exactly similar. With the highest esteem etc.²⁸

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since my last, I have been favored with your letters of the 10th. and 18th. inst:, the last covering Mr. Rawlins's plan and estimate for my new room, for your exertion to obtain which, I thank you. The plan is plain, as I requested; but the Estimate I think is large: however as I pretend not to be a competent judge of work, and know that we are always in the power of workmen, I will not decide absolutely upon the moderation he pretends to have observed; but as your readiness to oblige me in this business has already

28. From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N.J.

Library of Congress

involved you in trouble, I will request the favor of you to take a little more, to bring it to an explanation and close.

For this purpose I send you herewith Rawlins's plan and estimate; and would beg the favor, as I have understood that Mr. Goff²⁴ of Baltimore has had much work of this kind done by Mr. Rawlins, to compare my plan and estimate with his work and prices; and if Mr. Goff is a man of information, and one who scrutinizes into work and prices from the time it takes to execute it, to ask his opinion of the charge.

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If the result of your scrutiny is in favor of Mr. Rawlins's moderation, I have then to pray that the matter may be fixed with him, and a time (not to exceed if possible, the middle of April) agreed on to begin the work with a serious intention to execute it with dispatch: also that the article of travelling expences may be defined and reduced to a stipulated sum. Or, wch. would come cheaper to me, that my waggon (a covered one) should remove his people and tools hither and back; and an equivalent named in lieu of expences for himself. This will leave no ground for discontent on either side, than which nothing being more disagreeable to me, I always endeavour to avoid it: I wish to know also, whether he, or I am to furnish the materials.

If on the other hand it shall be found that his price is too high (for it is not amiss to observe here, that almost the whole of the mouldings and figures are cast) I should be obliged to you to know from him whether he will take less, and precisely the sum to execute the work according to the plan, and this without much time for consideration; for having been twice disappointed already, and the work thereby considerably delayed, to my great inconvenience, I am determined if Mr. Rawlins will not do it reasonably, and begin it seriously in the Spring, to write immediately to Sir Edwd. Newenham of

24. Gough(?).

Library of Congress

Dublin, who has already introduced the subject to me, and given strong assurances of a visit in the Spring, to bring me a compleat workman when he comes, on yearly wages. But this I would avoid (as you will please to inform Mr. Rawlins) if he would do the work at near its value, and in season. If you finally engage with Mr. Rawlins I should like to have a specific agreement drawn, to prevent mistakes or further delay; for the doing of which I wou'd chearfully pay an Attorney. Enclosed is a letter for Mr. Rawlins, open.

Had the public prints spoken truth respecting the present from his catholic Majesty, and two Jacks had arrived; it would have given me great pleasure to have obliged your friends on the Eastern shore by a compliance with your request. There were only two presented to me by the King of Spain, one of which by the advices I have received from Boston, was lost in a storm on his passage to Beverly. The other will scarcely do more, if he gets home safe, than answer my own purposes; but if you, or any friend of yours have a she ass which you would wish to put to him for preservation of the breed, he is much at your service, and you shall be very welcome to the use of him for her.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for Mrs. Tilghman and yourself; and with sentiments of sincere esteem and regard, I am, etc.²⁵

25. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN RAWLINS

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Sir: Your Letter and plan came safe, tho' I do not pretend to be a competent judge of this kind of work, yet from the little experience I have had in it, and from a certain knowledge that most of the mouldings and decorations are with great ease and expedition cast, of a material too which is by no means expensive, I do not scruple to declare that your Estimate exceeded my expectation.

Library of Congress

This, and not understanding the plan fully from an unaccustomedness to drawings, together with the indefinite charge of travelling expences, which may be great or little; and a desire of having something finally determined without giving the trouble of coming here again; or of fixing matters by an intercourse of letters which might be tedious and troublesome, and the first of which by no means suiting me, as I must be upon a certainty, having been twice disappointed and put to much inconvenience for want of the room. These reasons I say, have induced me to communicate my ideas to Colo. Tilghman on this business, and to authorize him on the spot to fix matters decidedly with you. Any Agreement therefore which he may make on my behalf, will be as obligatory on me as if I was present to sign and ratify it.

If an Agreement takes place, I wish to know precisely, and as soon as may be, what will be previously necessary for my Joiners and Carpenters to do, or to prepare that there may be no delay after you arrive; for besides the inconvenience I already feel from the want of the new room, you know that to complete this, the communication with another must be opened, and that unless both are finished before the season arrives which requires fire, I shall be much distressed. Whilst the weather is warm,

the Common Hall and Piazza will do very well, as substitute for the Drawing Room or Parlour; but when the weather becomes cool we must retire to a fireside.

I think it highly probable that the ceilings of my upper rooms may want plaistering, which would make the job more deserving attention; some of them I am sure do, and if we can agree upon a price I may be inclined to renew the whole. I am, etc.²⁶

To SAMUEL VAUGHAN

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 9th. and have received the pamphlet which you were so obliging as to send me, entitled "Considerations on the Order of

Library of Congress

Cincinnatus, by the Count de Mirabeau.”¹⁸ I thank you my good Sir, for this instance of your attention; but wish you had taken time to have perused it first, as I have not yet had leisure to give it a reading. I thought, as most others seemed to think, that all the exceptionable parts of that Institution had been done away at the last general meeting; but with those who are disposed to cavil, or who have the itch of writing strongly upon them, nothing can be made to suit their palates: the best way therefore to disconcert and defeat them,

26. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

18. Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, Comte de Mirabeau, first published his “Considérations sur l'ordre de Cincinnatus” in London, in 1784. An English translation was also published in London in 1785; the English translation was published in Philadelphia in 1786; and a German translation in Berlin in 1787.

is to take no notice of their publications; all else is but food for declamation.

There is not I conceive, an unbiassed mind, that would refuse the Officers of the late Army the right of associating for the purpose of establishing a fund for the support of the poor and distressed of their fraternity, when many of them it is well known, are reduced to their last shifts by the ungenerous conduct of their Country, in not adopting more vigorous measures to render their Certificates¹⁹ productive. That charity is all that remains of the original Institution, none who will be at the trouble of reading it can deny.

I have lately received a letter from Mr. Vaughn (your son) of Jamaica, accompanied by a puncheon of rum, which he informs me was sent by your order as a present to me. Indeed, my Dr. Sir, you overwhelm me with your favors, and lay me under too many obligations to leave a hope remaining of discharging them. Hearing of the distress, in which that Island, with others in the Wt. Indies is involved by the late hurricane, I have taken the liberty of requesting Mr. Vaughans acceptance, for his own use, of a few barrels of superfine Flour

Library of Congress

of my own manufacturing. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are offered to Mrs. Vaughan, yourself and family, and with the highest esteem &c.20

19. Of pay due.

20. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY**

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's favor of the 11th. and am much obliged to you for the Commissioners report respecting the cut from the Waters of Elizabeth River to those of Albemarle Sound. And it is with great pleasure I have since heard that that matter is in a prosperous way in our Assembly, and placed on a footing (reasonable and just I think) which is likely to meet the approbation of the Legislature of No. Carolina. It has always been my opinion since I first investigated the Great dismal Swamp as a member and manager of that Company that the most advantageous Cut would be found to be through Drummonds pond to the head of Pasquetank and I have Surveys and Notes which prove it I think, incontestably. Mr. Andrews's conjectures, with respect to Locks, I conceive is justly founded; for if the bed of the lake is above the level of the Water of Elizabeth River and Pasquetank the reflux by means of the Canal being greater than the influx must undoubtedly drain the Pond and render it useless as a reservoir without these Locks; but the places at which it may be proper to establish them must I should suppose depend upon the level and suitableness of the ground to receive them after the cut is made which should be begun at the extreme ends that the water may run off[f] (and if with any velocity) to contribute to the Work.

If this cut is effected, the obstructions in the Roanoke removed (which will most assuredly follow) and the inland Navigation of the Rivers James

Library of Congress

and Potomack compleated according to Law it will open channels of convenience and wealth to the Citizens of this State that the imagination can hardly extend to and render this the most favoured Country in the Universe. These measures only require a beginning to shew the practicability, ease and advantage with which they may be effected. Rappahanock and Shanondoah (the latter through a long extent of it) will follow the example and I see nothing to prevent the two branches of York River from doing the same.

The consequence in the article of draught Cattle alone, and to our Roads will be inconceivably great. The latter with small amendments will always be in good order when the present number of Carriages are no longer taring them to pieces in the most inclement seasons of the year; and the ease to, and saving in the former will be felt most interestingly by the farmer and Planter in their annual operations.

But until these things are accomplished and even admitting they were done, do you not think, my good Sir, that the credit, the saving, and convenience of this Country, all require that our great roads leading from one public place to another should be shortned, straightned, and established by Law; and the power in the County Courts to alter them withdrawn ?

To me these things seem indispensably necessary, and it is my opinion they will take place in time the longer therefore they are delayed the more people will be injured by the Alterations when they happen. It is equally clear to me, that putting the lowest valuation²⁷ upon the labour of the people who work upon the roads under the existing Law and custom of the present day the repairs of them by way of Contract to be paid by an assessment on certain districts (until the period shall arrive when turnpikes may with propriety be established) would be infinitely less burthensome to the Community than the present

27. The word "possible" seems to have been crossed off at this point.

mode. In this case too the Contractor would meet with no favor; every man in the district wd. give information of neglects; whereas negligence under the present system is winked at by the only people who know how, or can inform against the Overseers; for strangers had rather encounter the inconvenience of bad roads than the trouble of an information and go away prejudiced against the Country for the polity of it. With great esteem and respect etc.

[V.S.L.]

***To COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU**

Mount Vernon, December 1, 1785.

My dear Count: Your letter of the 2d. of June, which you had the goodness to write to me at the moment of taking leave of the venerable Doctr. Franklin, now lyes before me; and I read the renewed assurances of your friendship with sentiments of gratitude and pleasure, short of nothing but the satisfaction I should feel at seeing you, and the recollection of the hours, on which, toiling together, we formed our friendship. A friendship which will continue, I hope, as long as we shall continue Actors on the present theatre.

A Man in the vigor of life could not have borne the fatigues of a passage across the Atlantic with more fortitude, and greater ease than Doctor Franklin

did; and since, instead of setting himself down in the lap of ease, which might have been expected from a person of his advanced age, he has again entered upon the bustling scenes of public life, and in the chair of State, is endeavouring to reconcile the jarring interests of the Citizens of Pennsylvania. If he should succeed, fresh laurels will crown his brow; but it is to be feared that the task is too great for human wisdom to accomplish. I have not yet seen the good old Gentleman, but have had an intercourse by letters with him.

Library of Congress

Rumours of War still prevail, between the Emperor and the Dutch; and seem, if News Paper Accounts are to be credited, to be near at hand. If this event should take place, more powers must engage in it, and perhaps a general flame will be kindled 'ere the first is extinguished. America may think herself happy in having the Atlantic for a barrier, other ways, a spark might set her a blazing. At present we are peaceable; and our Governments are acquiring a better tone. Congress, I am persuaded will soon be vested with greater powers. The Commercial interest throughout the Union are exerting themselves to obtain these, and I have no doubt will effect it. We shall be able then, if a Commercial treaty is not entered into with Great Britain to meet her on the restrictive and contracted ground she has taken; and interdict her Shipping, and trade, in the same manner she has done those of these States. This, and this only, will convince her of the illiberality of her conduct towards us. or, that her policy has been too refined, and over strained, even for the accomplishment of her own purposes.

Mrs. Washington is thankful for your constant remembrance of her, and joins me in every good wish for you and Madame de Rochambeau. With sentiments of the warmest attachment, and greatest respect I have the honor etc.²⁹

29. From the original in the *Rochambeau Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To CHARLES SIMMS AND DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, December 3, 1785.

Gentn: As President of the Board of Directors for the Potomac company, I have the honor to enclose you a Petition which we pray you to present to your honorable House; and to use your best endeavours to have the prayer of it enacted into a Law. The Petition is so full,

Library of Congress

and the request of it so reasonable, that we do not suppose there can be the least opposition to it, otherwise than by delay; because the enemies of it (if there are any) must on the score of public saving, yield assent to it.

We have taken the liberty to accompany the Petition with the draft of a Bill to be enacted into a Law. A Petition and Bill similar to those have been sent to the Maryland Assembly. The reasons for this you will see into at once; they are, to render it unnecessary for the two Assemblies to correspond on so trivial a subject, to prevent trouble to each, to prevent delay, and that both Acts may be exactly similar.³⁰ I have the honor, etc.³¹

To CHARLES CARROLL AND THOMAS STONE

Mount Vernon, December 3, 1785.

Dr. Sir: The Directors of the Potomac Comy. upon a strict examination of the ground at the Great Falls of the river, and their ideas of that at the little Falls, find it necessary to apply to the Assemblies of the two States, to be relieved from that depth of canal which the late Acts for improving and extending the navigation of the river require.

The reasons are set forth at large in the Petition which, as President of the Board of Directors I now have the honor to transmit to Mr. Chase as a delegate, and member of the company, a similar one having gone to the Assembly of Virginia. But in a word, from our view of the matter,

30. Practically the same letter was sent to Samuel Chase, of the Maryland Legislature. A copy of this is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

31. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

it is sufficient to inform you that to dig four feet at these places will add greatly to the expence, without deriving the smallest advantage: we have therefore prayed for two feet

Library of Congress

depth, instead of four; and apprehending no other opposition but what may proceed from delay, for friends and foes (if there are any of the latter) to the Undertaking, ought to support the Bill upon the principle of œconomy, is the reason of my giving you the trouble of this Letter, praying your assistance in facilitating the passage of the Bill.³² I have the honor, etc.³³

32. Practically the same letter was sent to William Ramsay. A copy of this is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

33. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, December 4, 1785.

Sir: Your letters of the 15th. and 26th. of last month, are both at hand. With respect to the latter, I agree that Danl. Harrel may have the Lott No. 2 on the terms mentioned therein, and you may fill up Leases accordingly.

In answer to the first letter, rather than involve myself in uncertain law suits, but certain expence and perplexity, I would allow for paper payments of rent, the same as specie; but as you know what has been the practice and the consequence thereof in your own case as Collector for Colo. Fairfax, and in that of others under similar circumstances, I should conceive that you could determine the point, of conduct proper to be pursued

better than I, who have been entirely out of the way of knowing what the Law, custom, or judicial proceedings in the Courts have decided. However, as I have already observed, rather than go into a litigation of the matter (unless there is every reason to expect a decision in my favor) I wou'd make the same allowance for paper, however unjustly and rascally it has been imposed, as I would for specie, taking care to shew no indulgence hereafter to those who had made them.

Library of Congress

Receipts for rents, from my brother will be sufficient for the Tenants; but it will be necessary in your settlemt. with them, to take an account of all these payments, that I may be able to settle with his Estate. This is indispensably necessary, as, from what I can learn, he has been very inattentive himself in making proper entries of the sums paid him: the date of each receipt is as essential as the name of the person is to whom given. I am, etc.³⁴

To COMTE DE DAMAS³⁵

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: I had the honor to be favor'd with your letter by Mr. Houdon, and thank you for your kind recollection of, and for the favorable sentiments you have expressed for me.

The moments I spent with the

34. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

35. Charles François Louis Joseph César, Comte de Damas.

army of France in this Country, are amongst the most pleasing of my life, and I shall ever remember with grateful sensibility, the polite attentions of all the officers who composed it, and of none more than yours.

I pray you to be persuaded of the interest I take in your happiness; and the pleasure I feel in assuring you of the esteem and regard with which, I have the honor, etc.³⁴

***To LOUIS GUILLAUME OTTO**

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: The letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 10th. of October, only came to hand the 28th. of last month.

My particular acknowledgments are due to you for your recollection of, and attention to me; and I pray you to be assured of the pleasure I felt at hearing that the place lately filled by Mr. de Marbois, near the Sovereignty of these States, was so happily supplied. On this instance of his most Christian Majesty's attention to your merits, I offer you my sincere congratulations.

For the favourable sentiments. entertained of me in France and particularly at the Court all my gratitude is due; but to none in a higher degree than to the Chevalier de la Luzerne; for whom I have the highest esteem and regard. For your obliging offers of Service here, or in France, I sincerely thank you and at the sametime I give you the trouble of forwarding a few letters by the Packet, beg you to believe that with much truth I have the honor etc.36

34. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

36. From the original in the *Paris Archives, Aff. Etrang., Mems. et Docs., E. U.*, vol. 6.

To RICHARD THOMAS

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: Having, a few days ago only, received your letter of the 13th. of August from Charleston, enclosing the duplicate of one from a Mr. Edmund Richards of Plymouth Dock, dated the first of Feby. last; I delay not a Post to inform you, as I have already done the said Edmd. Richards, that he is under a delusion which has not a single reality for a support, that I am astonished at his information, and which he had been at the trouble of enquiring a little more minutely into matters, before he had determined to make such a pointed application to me, or to have communicated his demands of me to others, for an Estate; First, because such an Estate as he speaks of was never left in trust to me;

Library of Congress

Secondly, because I never had the *least* acquaintance with his Uncle Richard Richards, or ever knew that there was such a man in existence; Thirdly, because I have just as much, and no more knowledge of Lawyer Haines and Lawyer Baitain, than I have of Richd. Richards; And fourthly, because I never heard of such an Estate as he claims, or the most trifling circumstance concerning it.

Of all these things Sir, you may, as I shall never write to Edmd. Richards again, give him the clearest and most unequivocal assurances; and add, that the most incontestible proofs of wch. he, or you in his behalf, may find, if either are disposed to examine further into the matter. I am, etc.³⁷

37. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To LOUIS DOMINIQUE ETHIS DE CORNY

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: I am really ashamed to have been so long in acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 3d. of August last year; but circumstances which would be more tedious in the recital, than important when told, have been the cause of it.

I have now the honor of enclosing you the receipt of the Treasurer of the Society of the Cincinnati of this State, for your Bill on Colo. Wadsworth; and wish it was in my power to have accompanied it with a Diploma: but it has so happened, that except a few which were struck at Philadelphia for the Members of that State at their own expence, none have yet been presented to me by the Secretary, for signing. I have the honor, etc.³⁷

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Library of Congress

Dr. Sir: Altho' I am so great a delinquent in the epistolary way, I will not again tread over the usual ground for an excuse, but rather silently throw myself upon your philanthropy to obtain one.

In reading the Memoir which passed thro' my hands to you (for I have no copy of it) I do not recollect that I was struck with any exaggerations or improprieties in it; nor is it in my power to give you a precise detail of the facts about which you enquire,

37. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

without unpacking my papers, and entering upon a voluminous research therefor; which might not after all elucidate the points. Whether Genl. Howe commanded in person at the intended surprize and attack of the Marqs. de la Fayette at Barren Hill, I am unable positively to say: I would suppose however that he did, first, because the narrative says so, 2dly because he did not relinquish the command until within a few days of the evacuation of Philada., and 3dly., because the British army came out in full force. That the column on the right commanded by Genl. Grant was strong, can admit of no doubt; (and report to the best of my recollection made the number 7000) because it was design'd to turn the Marquis's *left* flank, get into his rear, and cut off his retreat by the nearest and most direct roads; whilst he was to have been attacked in front, and on his right (which was next the Schuylkill) by the Commander in chief, and light infantry; by the first in front, by the other on the flank.

The French troops which were landed from on board the flat, formed a junction with the American Troops before, and were all under the command of the Marquis 'till my arrival. The position at Williamsburgh was taken I believe with a view to form the junction, being favorable to it; the defile between the College Creek which empties into James river and Queen's Creek which empties into York river, being very narrow, and behind the former of which the French landed in perfect security.

Library of Congress

My excursions up this river (for I have made several) have afforded

me much satisfaction, as we find the Undertaking to extend and improve the navigation of it, is not only practicable; but that the difficulties which were expected to be met with, rather decrease than multiply upon us.

I come now, My good Doctor, to acknowledge in a particular manner the receipt of your obliging favor of the 7th. Ult., and to thank you for your kind and valuable present of Fish which is very fine and had a more successful passage than the last, no Accot. of which having ever yet been received. I have too Mrs. Washington's particular thanks to offer you for the flower roots and seeds, which she will preserve in the manner directed. I have put into a box with earth, shrubs of the redwood (or redbud) and Fringe tree, which General Lincoln promised his Vessel should heave to and take for you as she passed by. I was going to send other flowering shrubs, but upon mentioning the names of them, the Genl. and Colo. Henley said your Country already abounded with them. I forgot however, to ask them if you have the Magnolio; if you have not, I can send some by another opportunity.

I hope this Letter will find you quite relieved from the feverish complaint you had when you wrote last, and Mrs. Gordon in perfect health, to whom and yourself Mrs. Washington and the family (who are all well) join me in every good wish. Fanny Bassett and my nephew Geo: A. Washington have fulfilled an engagement of long standing, and are now one bone, and one flesh. With great esteem, etc.³⁸

38. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, December 7, 1785.

Library of Congress

Sir: Your letter of the 26th. ulto: came to my hands by the last Post; and the object of this shall be confined to a single point, taking another opportunity of writing to you more largely.

The meaning of my last Letter to you was not well expressed, if it was understood that actions of Trespass were to be brought, before the issue of the ejectments was known. I had no idea of this, because if my opponents should succeed in the latter, there would be no ground for the former; and I should incur a certain expence without a chance of profit: from the statement of the cases which you have mentioned, I now leave it altogether discretionary in you, whether to bring them afterwards or not. I never should have thought of this mode of punishment, had I not viewed the Defendants as wilful and obstinate sinners; presevering after timely and repeated admonition, in a design to injure me, but I am not all tenacious of this matter and take the chance of this letter's going by way of Baltimore, and *another* by the way of Philada., to request that these Actions may be at least delayed, if not altogether laid aside, according to circumstances.³⁹ I am, etc.⁴⁰

39. This letter was forwarded to Tench Tilghman with a brief note (December 6), asking him to forward it "as it is of some consequence to me that the enclosed should reach Mr. Smith before he commences his tour of the Western Counties in Pennsylvania." A copy of this is in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

40. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To CAPTAIN THOMAS BIBBY⁴¹

Mount Vernon, December 10, 1785.

Sir: Having delayed until this time to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 4th. of May from New York, is to be ascribed more to the expectation I have been under of having the pleasure of seeing you in this State and at this house, than to any other cause: and I take the present occasion of assuring you that if business or inclination should bring

Library of Congress

you to the southward, I should be happy in the opportunity of testifying my respect for the introduction of Sir Edward Newenham, and of offering you the civilities which are due to a gentleman of your merit.

By mistake a packet which I herewith send was forwarded to me by a Mr.

41. Of the British Royal Fuzileers.

McKuinan,⁴² to whose care with another for myself, it was comitted by Sir Edward.⁴³ I hope it will reach you safe, and that the delay occasioned by the circuitous rout it has taken will be attended with no inconvenience. I have the honor, etc.⁴⁴

***To DAVID STUART**

Mount Vernon, December 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since writing to you by the last Post I have finished the measurement of my Corn, and find that I shall not make half enough to Serve me. Permit me to request the favor of you therefore to enquire upon what terms any of the Delegates from the Eastern Shore would contract with you in my behalf for 800 Bushs. of clean and good Oats, to be delivered at my landing as soon after Christmas as may be. If you can engage the Oats at a price not exceeding three shillings pr Bushel, I would then pray you to close a bargain without the delay of advising me, and reduce it to writing with a penalty for Non-performance on either side; but, if they are not to be had at this price to fix the lowest terms on wch. they may be had upon my saying yea by return of the Post after they are communicated to me.

42. Charles McKieinan (McKuinan).

43. On December 10 Washington wrote McKieinan a brief acknowledgment. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

Library of Congress

44. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The above are for Horses. I am under as pressing a necessity to provide for my People, all the Corn I have made not being more than sufficient to support my Plantations. My house people are without, and none in these parts to be had. If there[fore] the Plantations below⁴⁵ (in New Kent and King William) have any to spare I should be glad to get two hundred Barrels for which I will allow the same they sell at to others, or the same price that Corn bears on that River.⁴⁶ This would be doubly convenient to me, for to be plain my Coffers are not overflowing with money. You cannot too soon give me a definitive answer on this point, Nor indeed with respect to the Oats, as I must not trust to the Chapter of Accidents for a supply.

With great esteem etc.

[HD.C.]

***To ALEXANDER HAMILTON**

Mount Vernon, December 11, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have been favoured with your letter of the 25th. of November by Major Farlie.

Sincerely do I wish that the several State Societies had, or would, adopt the alterations that were recommended by the General meeting in May 1784. I then thought, and have had no cause since to change my opinion, that if the Society of the Cincinnati mean to live in peace with the rest of their fellow Citizens, they must subscribe to the Alterations which were at that time adopted.

That

45. The "Letter Book" has "of Mr. Custis."

Library of Congress

46. The Pamunky.

the jealousies of, and prejudices against this Society were carried to an unwarrantable length, I will readily grant. and that *less* than was done, *ought* to have removed the fears which had been imbibed, I am as clear in, as I am that it would not have done it; but it is a matter of little moment whether the alarm which siezed the public mind was the result of foresight, envy and jealousy, or a disordered imagination; the effect of perseverance would have been the same: wherein there would have been found an equivalent for the seperation of Interests, which (from my best information, not from one State only but many) would inevitably have taken place?

The fears of the people are not yet removed, they only sleep, and a very little matter will set them afloat again. Had it not been for the predicament we stood in with respect to the foreign Officers, and the charitable part of the Institution I should, on that occasion, as far as my voice would have gone have endeavoured to convince the narrow minded part of our Countrymen that the Amor Pate. was much stronger in our breasts than theirs, and that our conduct through the whole of the business was actuated by nobler and more generous sentiments than were apprehended, by abolishing the Society at once, with a declaration of the causes, and the purity of its intention. But the latter may be interesting to many, and the former, is an inseperable bar to such a step.

I am sincerely concerned to find by your letter that the Baron⁵⁰ is again in straightened circumstances. I am much disinclined to ask favors of

50. Baron Steuben.

Congress, but if I knew what the objects of his wishes are I should have much pleasure in rendering him, any services in my power with such members of that body as I now and then corrispond with. I had flattered myself, from what was told me some time ago, that Congress had made a final settlement with the Baron much to his satisfaction.

Library of Congress

My Compliments and best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, are presented to Mrs. Hamilton. I am etc.

PS. When you see Genl. Schuyler and family I pray you to offer my best respects to them.⁵¹

To THE TRUSTEES OF THE ALEXANDRIA ACADEMY

December 17, 1785.

Gentlemen: That I may be perspicuous and avoid misconception, the proposition⁵³ which I wish to lay before you is committed to writing; and is as follows:

It has long been my intention to invest, at my death, one thousand pounds current money of this State in the hands of Trustees, the interest only of which to be applied in instituting a school in the Town of Alexandria, for the purpose of educating orphan children who have no other resource, or the children of such indigent parents as are unable to give it. The objects to be considered of and determined by the Trustees for the time being, when applied to by the parents or friends of the children who have pretensions to this provision.

51. From the original in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

53. At the meeting of the trustees (December 17) which accepted this offer, those present were: Dr. William Brown, president; Benjamin Dulany, William Hartshorne, James Hendricks, John Fitzgerald, Samuel Hanson, and Charles Lee. Their letter of acceptance to Washington is dated Dec. 17, 1785, and is in the *Washington Papers*.

It is not in my power at this time to advance the above sum; but that a measure, that may be productive of good, may not be delayed, I will until my death, or until it shall be more convenient for my Estate to advance the principal, pay the interest thereof (to wit, fifty pounds) annually.

Library of Congress

Under this state of the matter, I submit to your consideration the practicability and propriety of blending the two institutions together, so as to make one Seminary under the direction of the President, Visitors, or such other establishment as to you shall seem best calculated to promote the objects in view, and for preserving order, regularity, and good conduct in the Academy. My intention, as I have before intimated, is, that the principal sum shall *never* be broken in upon; the interest *only* to be applied for the purposes above mentioned. It was also my intention to apply the latter to the *sole* purpose of education, and of that kind of education which would be most extensively useful to people of the lower class of citizens, viz. reading, writing and arithmetic, so as to fit them for mechanical purposes.

The fund, if confined to this, would comprehend more subjects; but, if you shall be of opinion, that the proposition I now offer can be made to comport with the institution of the School which is already established; and approve of an incorporation of them in the manner before mentioned, and thereafter, upon a full consideration of the matter, should conceive that this fund would be more advantageously applied towards cloathing and schooling,

than solely to the latter, I will acquiesce in it most cheerfully; and shall be ready, (as soon as the Trustees are established upon a permanent footing,) by Deed or other instrument of writing, to vest the aforesaid sum of One thousand pounds, in them and their successors forever, with powers to direct and manage the same agreeably to these my declared intentions.⁵⁴

***To NOAH WEBSTER**

Mount Vernon, December 18, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 16th., with others, were put into my hands yesterday in Alexandria; but being engaged at that time I did not open them until I returned home in the evening; or,

Library of Congress

I would have sought an opportunity of conversing with you on the subject of it, whilst I was in Town.

On the footing you have placed your offer, though I feel myself obliged by it, I am unable, from the indecision of it, to return a satisfactory answer. It would by no means suit me to await the determinations of the Assemblies of those States (which are mentioned in your letter) on the applications you are about to make to them; and *afterwards*, a consultation of circumstances and your convenience, before you could resolve on what plan to fix. Nor indeed, does your offer go to more than *one* point, whilst I have *three* objects in view, namely: the education of the Children, Aiding me in my

54. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

corrispondencies, and keeping my Accounts: The last of which, I believe might be dispensed with; or, at any rate when they are once digested, and brought into order (which is the present employment of Mr. Shaw) they will require very little attention; but the other two are essential to my purposes.

I send you the sketches of American policy,⁵⁵ and conceive that the publication of extracts therefrom will be pleasing, and may be beneficial. All possible lights ought, in my opinion, to be thrown on subjects of this importance, for it should seem that ignorance, or design, have too great a share in the government of public measures. I am etc.

[N.Y.P.L.]

To BENJAMIN HARRISON

Mount Vernon, December 18, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 7th. inst: enclosing an Act of the General Assembly, which passed at my request.⁵⁶

Library of Congress

This new proof of the confidence repos'd in me by my Country, lays me under additional obligations to it; and I am equally sensible of its favors, and the polite and friendly wishes with which you accompanied the act.

If the etiquette of business makes

55. Webster's "Sketches of American Policy" was printed as a pamphlet in 1785.

56. Act of Oct. 17, 1785, permitting Washington to dispose of the donated stock of the Potomac and James Rivers navigation companies, as he so requested.

it necessary for me officially to acknowledge the receipt of this Act, let me entreat you my Dr. Sir, to offer to the House in my behalf but in your own words, the grateful sense I have of its goodness upon this occasion, with assurances that the confidence reposed in me, shall not intentionally be abused. With great esteem, etc.

PASS FOR PEDRO TELLEZ

December 19, 1785.

The Bearer of this Pedro Tellez, is the Spaniard who was sent from Bilboa in Spain, with one of the Jack Asses which was presented to me by His Catholic Majesty, and is on his journey to New York, to the Minister of Spain, with a view of returning to his own Country from thence.⁵⁷

Not being able to speak any other language than that of his native tongue, it is requested as a favor of the good people on the road to assist and direct him properly, which will be considered as an obligation conferred on, G: Washington⁵⁸

Library of Congress

57. A certificate also was furnished Tellez (December 19) that he had delivered one jackass and that his care and attention to the valuable animal was most acceptable. A copy of this certificate is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

58. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To FRANCISCO RENDON

Mount Vernon, December 19, 1785.

Sir: This letter will be handed to you by Mr. Peter Tellez who attended the Jack Ass, which arrived safe, to this place: for want of an Interpreter I have not been able to understand him perfectly; but as far as his wishes have been explained to me, they are, that he may be permitted to return to Spain as soon as possible; that it is proper he should go by the way of New York to see his Excellency Don Gardoqui; that as he was employed by his Catholic Majesty, and in the Kings pay until he return'd (his wife receiving part of it from Mr. Gardoqui at Bilboa) he would take none from me.

Under these circumstances I have forwarded him to Nw. York, after prevailing on him to take a trifle as an acknowledgment of the obligation I am under to him, for his care of the animal on which I set the highest value. He has some expectation indeed, that at his return his Majesty may bestow some humble appointment on him, in the Collection of his Customs; and therein he has my wishes, but I could not ask it for him, or even hint it to the Minister.

Not having the honor of an acquaintance with his Excellency Mr. Gardoqui, I have taken the liberty of making these communications to you; and to pray, if there is anything improper in my sending Mr. Tellez to Nw. York, or in my conduct towards him, that it may be ascribed to misconception, and misunderstanding his wants by bad interpret

Library of Congress

ation. Altho' unknown, I pray you to make a tender of my respectful compliments to Mr. Gardoqui, and to accompany them with the strongest assurances of the pleasure I should feel in seeing him at this Seat of my retirement, if inclination should ever induce him to visit the States to the southward of Nw. York. It is unnecessary to offer you the same assurances, because I have repeatedly done it before, and you must have been convinced of my sincerity. With very great esteem etc.

P. S. Mr. Tellez is charged with a Letter from me to Mr. Carmichael, enclosing one to His Exy. the Count de Florida Blanca, praying that my homage and gratitude may be presented to his Catholic Majesty for the favor he has conferred on me for the honor of his royal notice.⁶⁰

***To COUNT FLORIDA BLANCA**

Virginia, December 19, 1785.

Sir: My homage is due to his Catholic Majesty for the honor of his present. The value of it is intrinsically great, but is rendered inestimable by the manner and from the hand it is derived.

Let me entreat you therefore, Sir, to lay before the King my thanks for the Jack Asses with which he has been graciously pleased to compliment me; and to assure his Majesty of my unbounded gratitude for so condescending a mark of his royal notice and favor.

That long life, perfect health, and unfading glory may attend his Majesty's

60. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

reign, is my fervent wish. With great respect and consideration I have the honor etc.⁵⁹

To WILLIAM CARMICHAEL

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, December 19, 1785.

Sir: One the Jacks with which his Catholic Majesty was pleased to present me, has arrived safe; and the enclos'd to his Minister is a testimony of my gratitude for the singular mark of his royal notice. I pray you Sir, to do me the honor of presenting it. I hesitate a while, whether to express my sense

59. From a photostat of the letter sent which is in *Archivo Historico Nacional* Madrid, *Estado*, Legajo 3885, *Expediente* 26.

of this obligation at first, or second hand; but considering the value of it, I determined on the former, and at the same time that I would enclose you a copy of what I had written.

The Spaniard, Seignor Pedro Tellez who accompanied the Jack which arrived safe, has expressed a wish to obtain a line of approbation from me; by means of which he thinks he could obtain some low office in the King's Customs: but it was a liberty I could not take, further than to express in the Certificate I have given him, my sense of his care of the animal which was entrusted to him. But if a word my good Sir, could occasionally drop from you to this effect, it might do an essential service to the poor fellow (who it seems has a wife and children) and would be considered as an additional favor conferred on, Sir Yrs. etc.⁶⁰

To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1785.

Dr. Sir: From the assurances you gave me I had flattered myself that I should 'ere this have received a payment from you; and I had no doubt of it after Colo. Fitzgerald informed me, five months ago that £200 had passed thro' his hands from Mr. White to you; which was the fund, if I understood you rightly, which you had appropriated for this purpose.

Library of Congress

I beg you to be assured that the disclosure I made to you of my circumstances was candid; and that it cannot be more disagreeable

60. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

to you to hear, than it is to me to repeat that my wants are pressing, some debts which I am really ashamed to owe, are unpaid; and I have been, for want of money, unable to do more with my manufacturing Mill, (which is expensive to me without) than to grind up my own Crops; for wheat is not to be bought on credit, and I have not cash to pay for it. But this is not the worst, I have not made half grain enough to support my people and stock this year, the deficiency must be bought at a high price, and (for there is no question of the Articles bearing it) for ready money. I must therefore get it at an advanced price, if to be had at all, on credit; or I must sell something at a low price to enable me to pay ready money. This is truly my situation. I am, etc.⁶¹

To THOMAS JOHNSON

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1785.

Dr. Sir: It so happened that your letter of the 4th. ulto. with its enclosures, did not meet a quick passage to me; and that some delays afterwards, more the effect of accident than neglect, prevented the Petition and Bill,⁶⁴ (which you are so obliging as to draw) from getting to the Assemblies of the two States, so soon as were to be wished; however they are now before them; and from that of Maryland, I am inform'd

61. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

64. Of the Potomac Company.

Library of Congress

by a gentleman to whom I had written on the occasion, that the business could meet with no opposition there; and from that of this State that it was reported reasonable. Acts it is to be hoped, will therefore pass, conformably to our desires.

I feel myself much obliged by the calculations you have been at the trouble to make and to transmit to me; and at all times shall be happy in a full and unreserved communication of your sentiments on this, or any other business. This in particular in a new work stands in need of all the information we can obtain, and is much indebted to you for many estimates, and ideas which have been very useful.

It is to be apprehended, notwithstanding the great encouragements which have been offered by the Directors of the Company for the hire of negroes, that we shall not succeed in obtaining them. An idea is entertained by the proprietors of them, that the nature of the work will expose them to dangers which are not compensated by the terms. Servants I hope are purchased 'ere this; Colo. Fitzgerald was to have gone yesterday day to George town for this purpose. If the appearance of the people is at all favorable, the price at which Colo. Deakens offers them will be no obstacle.

This letter, handed to the care of Colo. Deakens, will be accompanied by a small bag of Spanish Chestnutts, half of which you will please to accept, and the other contrive to Mr. Lee; they were sent to the Alexandria races in October to be given to him, but the delivery was neglected. It might be well perhaps to put them in sand to prevent an over drying, to the injury of vegetation. With very great esteem, etc.⁶⁵

65. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To LUND WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1785.

Library of Congress

Dr. Lund: Having come to a fixed determination (whatever else may be left undone) to attend to the business of my plantations; and having enquired of Geo: Washington⁶² how far it would be agreeable to him and his wife to make this place a permanent residence, (for before it was only considered as their temporary abode, until some plan could be settled for them) and finding it to comport with their inclinations, I now inform you that it will be in my power to comply with your wishes with less inconvenience than appeared when you first proposed to leave my employment.

The business of the Mill is what both of us, will be most at a loss about at first; and as the people wanting flour are in the habit of applying to you for it, it would be rendering me a service to give your attention to this matter, until he can become a little acquainted with the mode of managing it; and your advice to him afterwards in this and other affairs may be useful.

The mode of paying the taxes, the times of collection, and in what kind of property it is most advantageous to discharge them, and the amount of them, is another business in which he will be to seek; and I have not sufficient knowledge of the practice to instruct him.

Nothing else occurs to me at this time in which it is essential to give you any trouble after the present year; for if I should not be able to visit the plantations as often as I could wish, (owing to company or other engagements) I am resolved that an

62. George Augustine Washington.

account of the stock and every occurrence that happens in the course of the week shall be minutely detailed to me every saturday. Matters cannot go much out of sorts in that time without a seasonable remedy. For both our interests, the wheat remaining in the straw should be an object of your care. I am, etc.⁶³

To WILLIAM BAILEY

Library of Congress

Mount Vernon, November 22, 1785.

Sir: I have received your favor of the 19th. The expensive manner in which my nephews are proceeding at George Town, added to some other considerations, have determined me to remove them from the Academy at that place, to Alexandria.

I have already, for about fourteen months residence, paid to Mr. Stoddert and yourself £125.11.0 on their Accot.; and it appears from your letter of the above date, that for near half that time, they are yet owing for Board, and have an Accot. besides for cloathing; and these too almost independent of their schooling. I am, etc.⁷

63. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, December 24, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have received your favor of the 18th., and am exceedingly obliged to you for the Contract you have entered into on my behalf, with Mr. Savage,⁶⁶ for 800 bushels of oats. If you can extend the quantity to be had from him, to 1200 bushels in the whole, upon the same terms, it would add greatly to the favor as my crop of Corn is much worse than I had conceived it to be when I wrote to you last (not having received the tallies) which together do not amount to one third of what I made last year; which is insufficient to feed my negroes, much more to afford support for my Horses. This evinces the necessity also of my knowing speedily and precisely, if I may depend upon any from the Estate below, and the quantity.

The Eastern shore oats generally speaking, are light and indifferent; and what is worse, are often mixed with the wild onions: as I mean to sow oats next Spring to help me

Library of Congress

along, it would be obliging in Mr. Savage, if he could send me such as are free from this troublesome, and injurious plant to our fields.

I thank you too for the information respecting the interest of the loans to the Continent in this State: I send what Certificates I possess, to you; but fear that those who live at a distance from the Theatre, have little chance of being benefited by the Act of the Legislature; although they may get their Certificates to the Treasury on or before the time limited. but if I should be mistaken in this, you would serve me essentially

66. George Savage, of Northampton County, Va.

by bringing Cash in exchange for those which are enclosed, agreeably to the list which accompanies them. With great esteem, etc.⁶⁷

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, December 27, 1785.

Dr. Sir: In looking over the list of premiums proposed by the Agricultural Society of Philada., I perceive that those offered for the 2d. 3d. and 4th. articles, were to have been produced according to the requisin. by the 20th. inst:

Each of these being interesting to a farmer you would oblige me much therefore by giving me the result of the communications on these heads to the Society, if any discoveries worth notice have been handed to it.

Mrs. Washington joins me in offering the compliments of the season to Mrs. Powel and yourself, and in best wishes that you may see many returns of it. With great esteem, etc.⁶⁸

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

68. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

Annapolis, December 28, 1784.

Pursuant to the Resolves of the Honble. the Senate and Ho. of Delegates, and conformably to the direction of the Executive authority of the State of Virginia, we repaired to the City of Annapolis, and held a conference with the Gentlemen appointed by the Legislature of Maryland; the result of which is contained in the Inclosure No. 1.30

In consequence of the opinion given by the Conference the Legislature of Maryland have passed the Act inclosed, No. 2. and the Resolves No. 3.

It may be necessary for us to explain the reason for the provision in the Act. "that if Subscriptions should be taken in; or a meeting of Subscribers directed by the Legislature of Virginia at different times, different from those in the Act, then there should be a meeting at the time appointed by Virginia; and subscriptions made at times by them appointed, should be received". It was thought by the Confertees to be most proper to appoint certain times in the Act, but as it was doubtful whether the Act would get to Virginia in time to be adopted at the present Session of the Assembly, it was judged necessary to make a provision to accomodate the Scheme to an Act to be passed by Virginia, or the next Session of their assembly, without the necessity of having recourse again to the Legislature of Maryland. but it is the opinion of the Confertees that an Act upon Similar principles to that passed by Maryland might, if possible be passed by the Assembly of Virginia at this Session; this would give Speedy beginning to the Work, and an oppertunity of embracing the present favorable state of things for accomplishing the views of the two States.

The Act appears to us, from every consideration we can give it, to be founded on just and proper principles, and to be calculated to answer in every respect the purposes for which it is designed; we conceive it a duty therefore to declare that it meets our entire approbation.

Library of Congress

The reasons why this Act has not the Signature of the chief magistrate are, because he is not present, and because it wants not this formality to give it validity.

30. The inclosures are not now found in the *Washington Papers*. The report of the proceedings of the Commissioners (inclosure no. 1) is printed in Corra Bacon-Foster's *Potomac Route to the West*, p. 45.

We should do injustice to our feelings were we not to add that we have been happy in meeting Gentlemen of liberallity and candour, impressed with the importance of accelerating the purpose of the Legislature of Virginia of opening a free and easy intercourse with the Western territory, and for the extension of inland Navigation; and, that, there has been a perfect accordance of Sentiment in the Legislature of the State.

Respectfully submitted by Go: Washington and Horatio Gates.³¹

[C.L.]

***To TENCH TILGHMAN**

Mount Vernon, January 7, 1786.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 30th. Ult^o. did not reach me until last night. Except it is by chance, letters by the Stage never get to my hands so quickly as they do by the Post; nor so safely, because I send regularly every post day to the Office in Alexandria, whilst those by the Stage getting into private hands await accidental conveyances from that place. I mention this circumstance as a reply might have been expected from me sooner.

As it is convenient and indeed essential to me, to have the use of my unfinished room as soon as may be, I agree to Mr. Rawlin's terms (as stated in your letter) in all their parts; not but that I am convinced from what I know of the business (being once part owner of as accomplished a workman as ever came to this Country, in that way, and the manner of its

Library of Congress

execution) that Mr. Rawlins has imposed upon Mr. Gough and now avails himself of the scarcity of Artisans of his profession, to extort high terms

31. Washington signed for Gates.

In 1784, or an approximate date, Washington drew up a tabular statement of "A List of the United States Loan Office certificates, in possession of, and belonging to George Washington. Payable in Virginia" and also of those payable in Maryland and "at the United States Office." This showed holdings amounting, both principal and interest, to \$28,930, which, in specie value, at the depreciation rate, amounted to \$8,002.92. A photostat of this, in the *Washington Papers*, was kindly furnished by Alfred C. Chapin, of New York City.

from me. Most of this work is cast, and is as quickly done as lead is run into a mould. But rather than encounter further delay, perhaps a disappointment, or ask the favor of a stranger to engage an undertaker to cross the Atlantic who might be troublesome to me thereafter, I submit to this imposition as the lesser evil.

As Mr. Rawlins is a stranger to me, and one, of whose character I have not the smallest knowledge; and as I have had some reason to remember an old adage, that one of the bad paymasters is him that pays before hand, I persuade myself that you will be satisfied I shall run no risk in advancing him money to the amount of £50 in the course of the winter, 'ere it is done. And as you are so obliging as to offer to do this, your drafts on me for such advances as you make him, shall be punctually paid.

When the agreement is specifically entered into, and bound, be so good as to request Mr. Rawlins to point out the preparative steps for me, that no delays may follow his arrival. I shall rely more upon your friendship and goodness, than upon any apology I could make, for an excuse for the trouble this business has already give you, and is likely to give, you

Library of Congress

before its finally accomplishment; and can only assure you that with unfeigned esteem and Affection I am, etc.

P. S. I send this letter to Alexa. to take the chance of a private conveyance, but it is probable the Post will offer the first.

To CATHERINE MACAULAY GRAHAM

Mount Vernon, January 10, 1786.

Madam: I wish my expression would do justice to my feelings, that I might convey to you adequate ideas of my gratitudes for those favourable sentiments with which the letter you did me the honor to write to me from New York, is replete. The plaudit of a lady so celebrated as Mrs. Macaulay Graham is, could not fail of making a deep impression upon my sensibility; and my pride was more than a little flattered by your approbation of my conduct thro'an arduous and painful contest.

During the time in which we supposed you to have been on your journey to New York, we participated in the distresses which we were sure you must have been involved in on account of the intemperature of the air, which exceeded the heats common in this Country at the most inclement season: and tho' your letter was expressive of the great fatigue you had undergone, still we rejoiced that the journey was attended with no worse consequences.

I hope, and most sincerely wish that this letter may find you happily restored to your friends in England, whose anxiety for your return must, I am persuaded, have been great; and that you will have experienced no inconvenience from your voyage to America.

Mrs. Washington who has a grateful sense of your favorable mention of her; and Fanny Bassett and Major Washington who, since we had the honor of your company, have joined

Library of Congress

their hands and fortunes, unite with me in respectful compliments to you; and in every good wish that can render you and Mr. Graham happy. The little folks enjoy

perfect health. The boy, whom you would readily have perceived, was the pet of the family, gives promising hopes from maturer age.

With sentiments of great respect and esteem, I have the honor, etc.⁷⁰

To JAMES MERCER

Mount Vernon, January 20, 1786.

Dr. Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 10th. inst: with its inclosures, the last are returned signed. I also send you a copy of the courses of the Lotts purchased by yourself and me at the sale of your brother's Land, and shall thank you for the conveyances which are necessary to secure the legal right to those which I hold.

I am sorry to hear that you still continue indisposed, you have my best wishes for a speedy and perfect recovery of your health, and with sentiments of sincere esteem etc.

P. S. A few days ago I received under cover, several copies of the inclosed proposals⁷¹ from the Author; one of which has obtained a good many subscribers in Alexa. I use the freedom of sending a copy to you, that in case

⁷⁰. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

⁷¹. No subscription proposals for Gordon's "History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America" are now found in the *Washington Papers*. The work, in 4 volumes, first appeared in London in 1788.

yourself and friends in and about Fredericksburgh should incline to become subscribers to the work, an opportunity may be furnished. As the Doctr.,⁷² it is to be presumed, will look

Library of Congress

to me for a return of the number committed to my charge, I shall be glad to receive the enclosed when you shall find it convenient and proper, so as to be ready for his call. I have only to pray that the conditions may be complied with respecting the advance, as I would not incline to have any thing more to do in the business, after the subscription papers are returned.⁷³

To DIEGO DE GARDOQUI

Mount Vernon, January 20, 1786.

Sir: The letter which your Excellency did me the favor to write to me on the first of this month does me great honor: the sentiments which you have been pleased to entertain of my conduct are very flattering; and the friendly manner in which they are expressed is highly pleasing. They meet the approbation of a gentleman whose good wishes were early engaged in the American cause, and who has attended to its progress thro' the various stages of the revolution, must be considered as a happy circumstance for me; and I shall seek occasionally to testify my sense of it.

With much truth, I repeat the assurances offered to your Excellency thro' Mr. Rendon, of the pleasure I should have in seeing you at my Seat in this State, that I might express personally to you, how sensibly I feel for the proposed honor of your correspondence, and pray you to offer in

72. Rev. William Gordon.

73. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

such terms as you know would be most acceptable and proper, my gratitude to His Catholic Majesty, for his royal present to me, than which nothing could have been more flattering or valuable.

Library of Congress

With much esteem, respect and consideration, I have the honor, etc.⁷⁴

***To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER**

Mount Vernon, January 30, 1786.

Dr. Sir: The letter which you dropped for me at Alexandria I have received. If you can make it convenient to lodge the money in the hands of any person at that place, it would oblige me. I lie quite out of the line of opportunities to Annapolis, and to send there on purpose, would cost me 2½, or perhaps 5 pr Ct. to fetch it.

If Mr. Pine, the Portrait Painter, should still be at Annapolis (which is scarcely to be expected) you would oblige me by paying him Twenty Guineas, and Sixteen dollars; and his receipt for these sums, will be equal to that much of the £200 promised me. If he should have left Annapolis, I will remit the money to him myself.

Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments to Mrs. Mercer. We shall always be glad to see you both at this place on your rout to or from Annapolis. My best respects attend Mr. Spriggs⁷⁵ family. I am etc.

[H.S.P.]

74. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

75. Richard Sprigg.

To JAMES RUMSEY

Mount Vernon, January 31, 1786.

Sir: If you have no cause to change your opinion respecting your mechanical Boat, and reasons unknown to me do not exist to delay the exhibition of it, I would advise you to

Library of Congress

give it to the public as soon as it can be prepared, conveniently. The postponement creates distrust in the public mind; it gives time also for the imagination to work, and this is assisted by a little dropping from one, and something from another, to whom you have disclosed the secret: should therefore a mechanical genius hit upon your plan, or something similar to it, I need not add that it would place you in an awkward situation, and perhaps disconcert all your prospects concerning this useful discovery; for you are not, with your experience in life, now to learn that the shoulders of the public are too broad to feel the weight of the complaints of an individual, or to regard promises, if they find it convenient, and have the shadow of plausibility on their side, to retract them. I will inform you further, that many people in guessing at your plan, have come very near the mark; and that one, who had something of a similar nature to offer to the public, wanted a Certificate from me that it was different from yours. I told him, that as I was not at liberty to declare what your plan was, so I did not think it proper to say what it was not.

Whatever may be your determination after this hint, I have only to request that my sentiments on the subject may be ascribed to friendly motives, and taken in good part.

I should be glad to know the exact state in which my houses at Bath are.

I have fifty pounds ready, for which you may draw on me at any time; and I will settle for the whole as soon as possible.

Herewith you will receive a Magazine containing the estimates of the expence of the Canal in Scotland. It belongs to Mr. Johnson who requested me to forward it to you after I had read it, to him you will be pleased to return the book when you are done with it. With esteem, etc.⁷⁶

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, February 4, 1786.

Library of Congress

Sir: My last by Mr. Daniel McPherson would inform you why I did not write more fully by *that* opportunity; and my attendance since on the business of the Potomac Company at the Great Falls, is the reason of the delay in doing it until now.

Your letters, of the 10th. of Decr. and of the 12th. 17th. and 18th. of last month are before me, and such parts of them as have not been answered and appear to require it, shall be the subjects of this letter; taking them in the order of their dates.

The Butter is at length arrived, and as I had depended upon it, I shall keep the whole tho' the price is at least 2d. pr. Ct. more than I was supplied with very good for, at Alexandria in the fall. Where there is an evidence of exertion

76. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

in the Tenants to pay rents and arrearages, I think you act very properly by giving them encouraging words, and assurances of indulgence: distress to them, and little advantage to me, would accrue from a contrary conduct. But where it shall appear that there is no such intention; that to postpone payment is the sole aim; and where the conditions of the Leases have been unattended to by them, and their only object has been to carry the land, and not the produce of it to market, here, no favor is due.

Abner Grigg has never appeared here, if he comes, I shall not forget your information respecting him. In the meanwhile let me observe, that it is the compliance or non-compliance with the Lease which is to determine his right to return. If he is warranted by the tenor of the lease to do so, I shall not dispute the point with him; but watch his ways well in future without granting him any indulgences; if he is not, then take the speediest and most effectual mode to get rid of him. For your exertions in following and catching him, I feel myself obliged to you; as I also do for your endeavours to rent the vacant Lotts, altho' they should not be crowned with success.

Library of Congress

I hope you will be more fortunate in your collection than your letter of the 12th. seems to indicate, as it is on this I much depend for the payment of your wheat. It was unquestionably, my intention that Mr. Airess should pay the taxes of the Tenement he holds; as an evidence of it every Lott let at, and since that time, have been so expressed in the Leases: but whether it was declared in explicit terms, or even by implication to him at the time, my memory does not now serve me, and therefore I will not insist upon anything I am not clear in. The term for which he

is to hold it, I recollect well is for his own and his wifes life, and must be so filled.

As I have only Mr. Jenny's Accot. of the interference of lines; and as Surveyors fees (as established by Law) are high, perhaps it might be as well in the first instance to get the line between Mr. Scott and me run by any accurate man you can hire as the Surveyor of the County, and hear what he (Mr. Scott) has to say upon the subject. I want nothing but justice, and that, if to be obtained, I will have. But if, upon the whole, you find the business cannot be so well done by any other as the Surveyor of the County, I consent very readily to your employing him.

Having every reason to believe that the clover seed which you sent me last fall was bad, I can by no means think of taking more of it. If my fears of its not vegetating should be realized, I would rather have given £50, for a bushl. of good seed, than encounter the disappointment and loss of time will be consequent of it. I will not absolutely pronounce it bad, 'till the Spring vegetation comes on; but I have all the reason imaginable to dread it. The seed had from Philadela. is not imported, but the growth of the Country and cheaper than Mr. Ropers; but cheapness was not the point I aimed at, certainty was my mark, and if I have missed it, I have lost a season and my labour.

Your letter of the 18th. was accompanied with a statement of the Tenements and rents of my Land in Fauquier &c. for which I am obliged to you. That you will have trouble in

Library of Congress

reducing these matters to order, I have not, nor ever had any doubt of, but they will be plain and easy after this year, which will make

amends; as I am determined to continue the collection in the hands of an agent who by close attention will see that I have justice done me, not only in the punctual payment of the rents, but that the covenants thereof are duly attended to and complied with.

What reply to make to that part of your letter, wherein you speak of difficulties which may arise in case of the death of either of us, in the settlement of Accots., I know not: you have powers to act, and instructions how to act; and I here declare that if neither of these will comprehend all the cases which may arise in the prosecution of this business, my desire is that you would act for me as you would do for yourself: there can be no difficulty then, which I can foresee in the case; for these powers, these instructions and declaration will always justify a conduct that is not evidently fraudulent; of wch. there is not the smallest suspicion in the present case. But when time will admit of it, state the cases fully wherein directions are wanted, and my sentiments thereon shall be handed to you, this will be a further justification for your conduct.

Inclosed you have copies of the Accots. handed in by Lewis Lamont and his widow, together with copies of the Sheriff's receipts, which convey every information that is in my power to give you respecting his collection. I am, etc.⁷⁷

77. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

&To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, February 6, 1786.

My dear Sir: Your favour of the 4th. of Jany. never reached me till yesterday, or the receipt of it should have had an earlier acknowledgment. Let me in the first place thank you for your kind attention to my enquiries. And in the next, pray you to learn, precisely from Mr.

Library of Congress

Lear, upon what terms he would come to me; for I am not inclined to leave matters of this sort to after discussion, or mis-conception. Whatever agreement is previously made, shall be pointedly fulfilled on my part, wch. will prevent every cause of complaint on his.

Mr. Lear,⁷⁹ or any other who may come into my family in the blended characters of preceptor to the Children, and as a Clerk or private Secretary to me, will sit at my Table, will live as I live, will mix with the Company which resort to the Ho., and will be treated in every respect with civility, and proper attention. He will have his washing done in the family, and may have his linnen and Stockings mended by the maids of it. The duties which will be required of him are, generally, such as appertain to the offices before mentioned. The first will be very trifling 'till the Children are a little more advanced; and the latter will be equally so as my corrispondencies decline (which I am endeavouring to effect); and after my accts; and other old matters are brought up. To descend more minutely into his avocations I am unable, because occasional matters may require particular Services; nothing however derogatory will be asked, or expected.

79. Tobias Lear, of Portsmouth, N. H. He was employed by Washington as a secretary.

After this explanation of my wants, I request Mr. Lear would mention the annual sum he will expect for these Services, and I will give him a decided answer by the return of the Stages, which now carry the Mail and travel quick. A good hand, as well as proper diction would be a recommendation; on acct. of fair entries; and for the benefit of the Children, who will have to copy after it.

The discovery of extracting fresh water from Salt Water, by a simple process, and without the aid of fire, will be of amazing importance to the Sons of Neptune; if it is not viciated, or rendered nauseous by the operation; but can be made to answer all the valuable purposes of other fresh water, at Sea. Every maritime power in the world, in this case, ought, in my opinion, to offer some acknowledgment to the Inventor. With sentiments of great regard and friendship I am etc.⁸⁰

To WILLIAM LYLES & CO.⁸¹

Mount Vernon, February 8, 1786.

Gentn: I have received your favor of yesterday, and thank you for your ready compliance with my request. As soon as my Boat returns from Alexandria, I will immediately dispatch it with 25 barrels of superfine flour for your vessel, for the purpose of procuring if possible a she Ass, for my benefit, at Surinam.⁸²

I should be glad to know whether you commit the negotiation of your own

80. From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N.J.

81. Merchants of Alexandria, Va.

82. Dutch Guiana, South America.

business to the Captain, or consign it to a Merchant of that place, that I may entrust mine to the same person; and as I shall have to write to the gentleman, would wish in the one case or the other to know the name and address of the Consignee.

If I should not succeed in procuring the Ass; I will, if equally agreeable to you, abide the sale of the flour at Surinam, and receive the amount in Rum, Molasses or such other articles as come well from that place, advice of which I would thank you for; but if this should interfere in the *smallest degree* with your freight, it will be perfectly agreeable to me to have the returns in cash. I am, etc.⁸³

To GEORGE SAVAGE

Mount Vernon, February 8, 1786.

Library of Congress

Sir: Your skipper, Mr. Jno. Whitney, has delivered me eight hundred bushels of oats, agreeably to the Contract made with Doctr. Stuart in my behalf. They are good and clean, for which I thank you.

Mr. Whitney informing me that he was authorized to provide a freight for the Schooner he is in, I have engaged him positively, to bring me eight hundred bushels of Indian corn from the plantations of the deceased Mr. Custis on Pamunky river. I hope it is to be had at the lowest plantation (a few miles

83. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

above West Point), but of this I am not certain. I am to pay him six pence a bushel freight, delivered at my landing.

I expect no delay or disappointment will take place in this contract, as I have had the offer of two other vessels on the same terms, and have rejected them on account of this engagement. I am, etc.⁸³

To WILLIAM LYLES & CO.

Mount Vernon, February 10, 1786.

Gentn: As it is my wish to obtain a she Ass of the first kind, and think it is more in the power of a resident at Surinam, than it can be in that of the Captn. to procure such an one, I have written the enclosed letter to Mr. Branden requesting him to make the purchase accordingly. I hope the Captn. will ascribe this preference to no other cause than the one assigned; at the same time that I earnestly request his particular attention to the animal, if one should be shipped on my account.

In case of the failure in such purchase, I have requested Mr. Branden to send the proceeds of the sales of the flour, in Molasses and Coffee. You would oblige me by having

Library of Congress

the flour inspected, properly marked for Mr. Branden, and the bill of lading therefor put under cover with my letter to that Gentn., as it will save time and trouble. I am, etc.⁸⁴

83. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

84. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Paper*.

To SAMUEL BRANDEN

Mount Vernon, February 10, 1786.

Sir: I have lately received from Spain, a Jack Ass of the first race in the Kingdom, and am very desirous of availing myself of his breed. Hearing that she Asses of good appearance are to be had at Surinam, I take the liberty of asking your assistance to procure me one of the best kind; to be sent by the return of Captain Bartlett, who will deliver this letter to you.

Neither the Captn., or any body else with whom I have had opportunities of conversing, could tell me the cost of one of these animals at Surinam; but have supposed that twenty five barrels of superfine flour, would be adequate to the purchase. This quantity (equal I believe in quality to any made in this Country) I have the honor of shipping to your address: but if it should prove inadequate, the deficiency shall be made up in the way most agreeable to yourself. All I pray is, that I may receive one of the largest and best she Asses that can be obtained in your Country fit to breed from.

As the Captain is commissioned to purchase a She Ass for his owners, I should be glad, if the Bill of lading for mine (if one is sent to me) may be minutely descriptive of her. I hope every provision will be made for the accommodation and support of her on ship board: but if contrary to my wishes, and a disappointment happens, I request in that case that you would be so obliging as to send me in return for the flour, two hogsheads of Molasses, and the remainder in the best Coffee of your Country.

Library of Congress

If, in this request, I have used an unwarrantable freedom, it

proceeds from the good character given of you to me, by Messrs. Fitzgerald and Lyles of Alexandria, by whose vessel I write and who have offered me a passage for the animal. I am, etc.⁸⁵

***To CLEMENT BIDDLE**

Mount Vernon, February 10, 1786.

Dear Sir: A hasty letter which I wrote to you by Colo. Grayson, was accompanied with ten half Johans.; the application of which I informed you shd. be directed in a subsequent letter.⁸⁶ Let me now request the favour of you to send me the following articles if to be had.

A pair of Boots, and two pair of Shoes, to be made by Mr. Star (who has my measure) agreeably to the enclosed Memo.

Young's Six Months tour through England (his tour thro' Ireld. I have).

The Gentleman Farmer, by Henry Home.

Tulls Husbandry. All to be neatly bound and lettered.

200 Weight of Clover seed; to be fresh and good.

12 lbs. of Saint foin seed

6 lbs. of the field Burnet

if to be had good.

A Common Hunting horn of the largest and best sort.

Library of Congress

It will readily occur to you, my good Sir, that these Seeds (as they are to be sown this Spring) cannot be forwarded too soon. I ought indeed to have wrote for them at an earlier period, but they may yet arrive at a proper Season if they are quickly dispatched. At any rate, inform me if they are to be had, and the prospect there is of forwarding them, for thereon will depend my preparation of the ground.

85. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

86. This letter was dated Jan. 30, 1786. It was very brief and stated that "when I have more leizure to write" he would be "able to mention the purposes for which they [the ten half Johannes] are intended." This letter is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The Gazettes which were furnished by Mr. Dunlap, for my use, during my Military appointment, ought, undoubtedly be paid for by the public; and I had no doubt but that this had been done, regularly, by the Qr Mr General or his assistt. in the State of Pensylvania. If the case is otherwise, I am ready to give my aid towards his obtaining it. My respects to Mrs. Biddle. I am, etc.

I pray you to be pointed with respt. to the goodness of the Seeds: an imposition of bad seed is a robbery of the worst kind; for your pocket not only suffers by it but your preparations are lost, and a season passes away unimproved.

[H.S.P.]

To WILLIAM HARTSHORNE

Mount Vernon, February 20, 1786.

Sir: I ought to have acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 10th. sooner, tho' I am at a loss what answer to give it now.

Library of Congress

When I sent to Boston for my Jack Ass, which was previous to the presentation of Captn. Pearce's order, tho' subsequent to the date of it, I requested Mr. Cushing (the Lieut: Governor) to whose care this animal was addressed, to pay all the charges which had accrued for freight and other accidental expences attending the importation of him, and to draw upon me for the amount. In consequence, I have answered a Draft, to Mr. Taylor of your town, for 300 Dollars; and was informed by Mr. Cushing, by letter of equal date with the Draft, that he had not at that time been able to obtain Captn. Pearce's Accot., but that it should be transmitted as soon as the matter could be settled with him. In this way the thing has lain ever since;

Post after Post I have been looking for some further advice respecting this business, but hitherto in vain. I am ready at any moment to answer Captn. Pearce's demand, when it is properly ascertained (if it has not been already paid), but it would be inconvenient for me to advance the money twice: of this, I think both Mr. Shaw and L. Washington were requested some time ago to inform you, for if the 300 Dollars has not, in part, been appropriated to the payment of Captn. Pearce's demand, I know not for what purpose the order was drawn upon me. All the other charges did not amount to more than one third of that sum.

I depended so much upon others to enquire into the usual freight of a horse from London to this Country, as not, hitherto, to have taken any steps myself, to obtain information; and it is to be feared none has been taken either by Mr. Shaw or L. W., nor do I know at this moment where to direct my enquiries.

I am thankful for your attention to my request respecting the Buck Wheat and Flax seeds, and shall be glad to know when they arrive, as I wish to secure all my Seeds for Spring sowing, in time. I am, etc.⁸⁷

87. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*

To ROBERT TOWNSEND HOOE

Mount Vernon, February 21, 1786.

Sir: Your Letter of the 17th. did not get to my hands 'till yesterday, or it should have received an earlier acknowledgment.

Mr. Herbert either mistook me, or Messrs. Valk, Berger and Schouter have misunderstood him: for acquainting the former that a company of which I am a member, was desirous of my employing a number of hands to drain the great Dismal Swamp near Norfolk, and that I had been requested by it to enquire upon what terms two or three hundred Palatines or Hollanders could be imported for that purpose; his opinion being asked, he answered that he should see Messrs. Valk, Beyer and Schouter in a few days, (for he was then on the eve of a journey to Boston) and would know from them, or advised me to apply to them (I do not now recollect which) to obtain knowledge of the practicability and convenience of this measure. All I aimed at was information myself; and if the above gentlemen can give it to me, it would oblige me. The Company would wish to know upon what terms they, or any others, in their opinion would engage to deliver 300 able labourers, Germans or Hollanders, not more than eight women, at Norfolk. Whether these would come under Indenture, and for what term, or upon wages, and what. In a word what they would stand the Company pr. poll, in either case, delivered at Norfolk, freight, procuring them, and every accidental expence included, to the moment of such delivery at the Ship's side. I am, etc.⁸⁸

88. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ROBERT EDGE PINE

Mount Vernon, February 26, 1786.

Your favor of the 16th. of Decemr. (tho' some what delayed) came safely to hand.

Library of Congress

The pictures arrived shortly after in good order, and meet the approbation of Mrs. Washington and myself, the first of whom thanks you for the portrait of Fanny Washington, with which you have been so polite as to present her: She with the Major are on a visit to her friends in the lower parts of this State, and have been so since the middle of December.

It is some time since I requested a Gentleman of Annapolis (who is owing me money and was to have sent it to me) to pay you Twenty guineas and sixteen Dollars; the first for balance due on the pictures, the latter for their frames; but having heard nothing from him respecting it, I begin to suspect it never has been done, and therefore send these sums by Mr. Hunter of Alexandria.

I have lately received a Letter from our old and worthy acquaintance Colo. Fairfax, who again mentions you in terms of great regard. Mrs. Washington unites her best wishes to me for you, on congratulations on the safe arrival of Mrs. Pine &ca. With great esteem I am, etc.⁸⁹

89. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOSEPH HAWKINS

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1786.

At the request of Mr. Booth⁹⁰ I give you the trouble of this Letter: this request, added to an inclination to do justice, must be my apology for it. I have no other motive than to rescue his character from the injurious aspersions, which he says have been cast at it.

My acquaintance with Mr. Booth is of more than thirty years standing. I have known him in the characters of Bachelor, Husband and widower, in all of which conduct has been unexceptionable. In that of husband and father it was ever esteemed kind, affectionate and *remarkably* indulgent. In a word he has passed thro' life unimpeached by those who have

Library of Congress

had the best opportunities of forming a judgment of him, and to my best knowledge and belief has in every instance supported the character of a Gentleman.

I am, etc.91

90. William Booth, of Westmoreland County, Va.

91. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.